



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Seven Wise
MASTERS
OF
R O M E.



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Yet when his just Defence is rightly heard,
His INNOCENCE obtains the Victory;
And by his Masters help the Prince is clear'd.



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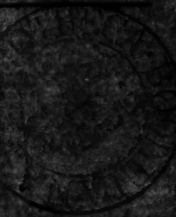


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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
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OF
ROME.

Now newly Corrected, bet-
ter Explained in many places,
and Enlarged with many pretty
Pictures, lively expressing the full

HISTORY.



London, Printed for J. Wright, at the
Crown on Ludgate-Hill, 1683.



To the Reader.

READER,



Or thy better delight, and more plainly to set forth the History to thy view, I have to my great cost added many Pictures, lively expressing the most material points of mine. If I may receive thy thanks, I think it a sufficient Reward. The History of it self is both Ancient and Moral, and containeth in it much Learning.

When Ignorance having a thick and dull ear, blinded most People, Men are compelled to draw the rude multitude to Attention of good Instruction by such pleasing allurements of Tales and Fables, as in this Book is set down; that as the mind is fed and delighted with the sweetness of Fabulous Stories, the Soul it self at the end (by often tasting the same Nourishment) grows quicker sighted; to behold the hidden and Mystical Wisdom contained under such close Riddles. For in few words to give you the meaning of this Morral, it is thus; The Emperor may signifie the World, who ha-

ving but one only Son, (who is Man) him to bring up well is all his care. But man losing his own Mother, (who is Reason or Divine Grace) falling into the hand of his Step-mother, (signifying Sin) who is an Empress of great bewitching, and one that commands the World; She works by all possible means the confusion of Man, and would prevail against his weakness, but that a Star from Heaven (by which is meant Goodness from above) instructs Man how to avoid the Allurements of Sin, by not opening his mouth to bid her welcome. And the better to prevent her mischief. He hath *Seven Wise Masters*, which are the Seven Liberal Sciences, to give him wholesome instructions, and by those helps save him from mortal danger. So that being thus armed, Man liveth to batter down Sin, (figured in the death of the Empress and her Minion) and in the end to gain a Rich Crown of glory and happiness, set ready for all those that in this Life labour to attain to Heaven by doing well.

This is the Explanation of the Moral; of which if thou make right use, it will be a rich Banquet to thy Soul. Farewel.

Here

Here Beginneth the

HISTORY

OF THE

Seven Wise Masters of *Rome*.

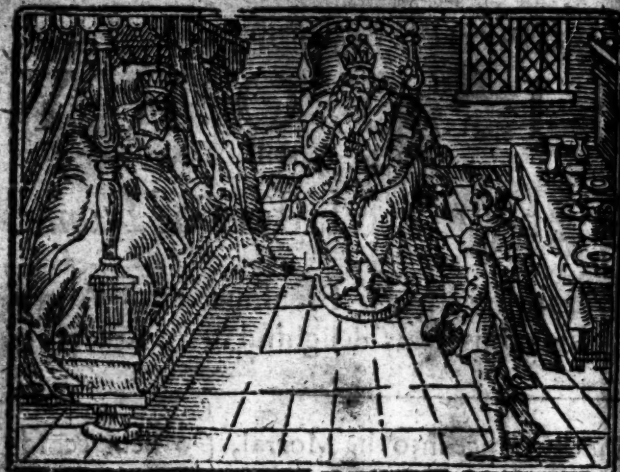
Containing many Pleasant and Witty
Narrations, very delightful to the Reader.

The Entrance into the Morral, (which according to things of Commick Pleasure) properly begins with a Funeral.

Sometime in the City of Rome there was a Famous Emperoz, named Pontianus, a man of great wisdom, he took to his wife a Kings Daughter that was very faire and amiable, to all people gracious, and to her Husband right dear: she conceived by him, and was delivered of a Son named Dioclesian. The Child grew apace, and of all people was beloved: and when he was of the age of seven years, his Mother the Empress falling sick, and feeling her self that she might not live, sent after her Lord the Emperoz (being rode forth on Progress) a Messenger, that he should return without tarrying, if ever he would see her alive.

And

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And when he was come, he said unto him,
 O my dear Loz, of this sickness I may not e-
 scape, wherefore the natural and tender love and
 care that is to me, towards you and your Son,
 makes a suit to you before my death. He reply-
 ed, desire what you will, I shall not deny you
 any thing. Then said she, after my death you
 will take another wife, as is most convenient,
 wherefore I beseech you, that she over my Son
 have no power, but that he be nourished far from
 her, and trained up in Learning. The Empe-
 ror answered my most dear Wife, your Petiti-
 on in all things shall be performed. Then turned
 the Empress, and gave up the Ghost. Many
 days after the Emperor bewailed her death, and
 long after he wend his heaviness, and would
 no wife be joyful.

How

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How the Emperor committed and delivered his Son to the Seven Wise Masters, to be instructed in Learning.

UPen a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he thought himself inwardly of his Son, saying in his heart, I have but one only Son, the which shall be my Heir: it is good while he is young, that he be set to learn Cunning and Wisdom, by which he may after my death govern and rule the Empire: intimating thereby that a worthy Prince taking upon him so great a weight and charge, as the Government of a Kingdom, ought first to learn to be his own governour, and to master his own affections. So that when he was early risen up from his bed, he caused to be called the Lords of his Council before him, and of them took advice what were best therein to be done. And they answered, Lord, in Rome are Seven Wise Masters, who live in great fame for their excellency in Arts: grave counsel, and instructions, let them be sent for, and deliver them your Son to be fostered and instructed in Learning. The Emperor understanding that, sent his Letters made powerful by his own Seal, to the Seven Wise Masters, that they should come to him without delay: they anon came before the Emperor, and he demanded of them, if they knew wherefore he had sent for them. They answered, The cause is as your will intendeth, we know not

but if it please you to shew us your mind, we be
ready to fulfil it to the utmost of our Powers.
To whom the Emperour said, I have but one
Son, which I shall deliver to you to confirm in
all good ways of Learning and vertue, so that
by your doctrine and wisdom, he may more wisely
govern the Empire after my decease.



The first Master named Pantillas, said, Your
Highness deliver me your Son, and I shall teach him as
much cunning within seven years, as I and all
my fellows can.

Then spake the second Master, named Lenculus,
Sir, of long time I have served you, and
hitherto have had no reward. I demand nothing
of you, but that you deliver me your Son to
govern and I shall make him as cunning
within six years as I and all my fellows.

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The third Master named Craton, said : my Lord, many times I have been with you on the Sea, in peril of my life, and have had no manner of reward : if I might for my recompence obtain that you would vouchsafe to commit your Son under my Governance, I should inform him as much within five years, if his wit will thereto attain, as I and my fellows can.

Then stood up the fourth Master named Malquidrack, who was right lean of body, and said My Lord, remember I and all my predecessors have served Emperors, and received no reward ; wherefore I ask no other thing but that you deliver me your Son to teach, and I shall make him take as much Science and Wisdom within four years as I and all my fellows have learned in all our lives.

Then speak the fifth Master, that was named Josephus, Lord, I am old, and many times am called to your Counsel, and you know that my counsel hath profited you, and so likewise may it do hereafter : Yet I desire no more, but that you deliver me your Son, and I shall instruct him in as much Cunning and Science, that he within three years shall be prompt in Wit as much as I and all my fellows have.

Then came the sixth Master named Cleophes, who said like to the other, promising to inform the Child in all their Cunning in two years.

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The seventh Master also desired the Child and promised to learn him within one year, the Sciences and Wilddome of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperoz said to my trusty friends, I am very much bound to thank you all, and every one of you, for that you have so earnestly desired to foster and instruct my Son: If I should now commit him to one and not to another, thereupon would ensue much dissention among you. Therefore to you all, and every of you, I commit my Son to be nourished and taught. The Masters hearing this, expressing both their greatness of joy, and forwardness in will to the Emperoz, all with one harmony of consent, received his Son, and led him towards the Court of Rome. Upon the way Spacraton to his fellows; if we this Child should reach within the City of Rome, there is so great resort and concourse of people, that it would hinder him in Learning; I know a fair place from Rome some two miles, right pleasant and delectable, there let us make a foursquare Chamber of Stone, and put him therein; and upon the walls thereof, let us paint and write the seven Liberal Arts, so that the Child at all times may see and behold his Doctrine therein as well as in his Book. This advice pleased them all, and was done accordingly in every point: The Masters diligently every day, during seven years, taught and instructed the Child; and

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determined among themselves, and said, it is good that we examine our Disciple, to see at what perfection our pains hath arrived, and what strength and growth his vertue and knowledge is come to: and they all wisely and religiously accorded to that counsel, then said Master Pantalas, how shall we probe him; Craton said, Let every one of us as he sleepeth, put under every corner of his Bed an Olive-leaf, and then we shall know if he perceived or felt any thing, or not: this done, he awaking greatly marvelled and lifted up his eyes towards the roof of the Chamber fervently. The Masters seeing that, said, wherefore lift you up your eyes so sharply: he answered, it is no marvel; for in my sleep I saw the uppermost part of my Chamber inclined towards the earth; or else under me it was lifted up: the Masters hearing this, said among themselves: if this Child live he shall be a man of great cunning and fame.

How the Emperor by the Counsel of the great Princes and Lords of his Empire, wedded another Wife.

The Princes and great Lords of the Empire in the mean time came to the Emperor, and said: My Lord, ye have only one Son, as is possible he might die, therefore it were determinable that you would wed another Wife that

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that thereby your joys and hopes may be bleſt with far more certainty and aſſured happineſſe in your Race and Iſſue, to the intent that the Empire of Rome be not left without an Heir. Moreover, ye are ſo mighty, that if it ſhould happen you to get many Children, you may promote and advance them all to great Dignities and Lordſhips. Whereupon answered the Emperour: it is your Counſel, that I ſhall take another Wiſe: then ſeeke me one that is gracious, a pure Virgin, Fair and Gentle born, and then I ſhall follow your counſel and advice. They went and ſought and ſearched out many Kingdoms and Countries; and at the laſt they found the Kings Daughter of Caſtile, that was right fair and beautiful, and her they gave the Emperour to Wiſe; who behaved herſelf ſo well, that anon he was ſo greatly taken in her love, that he forgot all the ſorrow of heart he had taken for the death of his firſt Wiſe. And when they had lived long together without any Children, and when the Emperours ſaw that ſhe might not conceive, when ſhe heard the Emperour had a Son with the Seven Wiſe Maſters, to be ſoſtered and taught, to the great good and profit of the Empire, ſhe thought in her ſelf and wiſhed his death, and from that very hour imagined how ſhe might conſpire his deſtruction. It happened on a Night as the Emperour lay in bed

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bed he said unto the Empress: my most dear and best beloved Wife, I shall now open to you the secrets of my heart, for under the Sun there is no Creature that I love so well as you, and therefore trust in my love.

Then said the fair Empress: if it be so as you say, I require of you one little boon or petition. Desire what you will, said the Emperoz, and all that in me is possible, I shall fulfil, and give it you. Then said the Empress, My dear Lord, you know I have no Child by you yet conceived, for which I am sore pensive and heavy; but Fame, that never conceals it self long to true joy, hath delivered this happy truth to me: that ye have one Son only, the which is set to the seven Wise Masters to be taught and governed, and him I hold and require for my own Son: wherefore I beseech ye send for him, that I may see him, and have consolation of his presence, as though he were mine own. Hereupon answered the Emperoz, it is sixteen years past since I saw him, your will shall be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperoz sent unto the Seven Wise Masters a Letter sealed with his secret Sign, that upon pain of death they should bring his Son in the Feast of Pentecost following.

How the Seven Wise Masters after the sight of the Emperors Letter would first observe the course and divine fore-shewing of the Firmament, and

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Planets, whether it were good to obey his Commandments or not.



And when the Masters by the Letter had understood the Emperors will, in the night they went and beheld the Stars in the Firmament, whether it would be expedient to bring the Child to the Emperour or not : & they saw clearly in the Stars, that if they should lead the Child in that time assigned, at the first word he should speak he should die an evil death : wherefore they were all very sorry ; and as they beheld another Star, they saw, that if they delivered not the Child at the day aforesaid, they should lose their heads. Then said one of them, of two evils the least is to be chosen : it is better that all we die, than that the Child should lose his life : there-

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therefore that we may save the Childs life, let us go to the Emperoz. And as they were thus sorrowful, the Child came down from his Chamber, and seeing his Masters so heavy, he demanded the cause of their heaviness: whereunto they answered: Sir, we have received your Fathers Letters, that upon pain of death, now this high Feast of Pentecost, we shall lead you to your Country, whereupon we have beholden the Firmament, wherein we clearly find, that if we (within the time prefixed) present you to your Father, at the first word that ye shall pronounce out of your mouth, ye shall be to the most vilest death condemned. Then said the Child, I must also behold the Firmament with the Stars: and so he did; and looke clear in little Star, that if he could abstain from speaking seven days he should preserve and save his life. And after he had seen this, called his Masters and shewed them the Star, and said: Behold my dear Masters, I sit perfectly in the Star, that if I abstain my self seven days, I shall save my life. He are now seven Masters, the wisest of all the world, it is an easie thing for you, every of you for me one day to answer, and with your wise answer every of you his day, my life may save and keep; and in the eighth day I shall speak my self, and save my life, and all you from peril. As the Masters did behold that certain Star, they thought with themselves that

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the Child had said truth, saying, Almighty God he thanked that the wisdom and cunning of our Disciple exceedeth us all. Then said the first Master Pantillas, Lord I shall speak for you the first day, and save your life. And Lentullus the second Master, said, I shall for you the second day answer: and so consequently every of them promised to answer for himself his day: and this said, they cloathed the Child in purple, leaped on horseback with a fair Company, and hastened with the Child to the Emperour.

How the Emperour rode to meet his Son coming from Study, with Joy, Solemnity and Triumph.



When the Emperour perceived that his Son was coming on the way, he rode with great joy to meet him, and the Masters understanding

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standing the coming of the Emperoz, said unto the Child, it is best that we depart, that in the mean while we may provide how we may save your life. The Child said, it pleaseth me well that you do so, but have mind of me in my necessity: so they took leave and departed toward the City, and the Child came after accompanied most honourably. And as he and his Father the Emperoz met, for joy he took his Son about the neck and kissed him, and said: My dear Son, now is my joy compleat, beholding in thee the treasure of my lifes comfort. How is it with you: it is long since that I saw you. He bowed down his head and answered nothing. The Father had great wonder why he speak not, and thought in himself, that his Masters had informed him so, that he riding should not speak. And when they were come into the Palace, and were descended from their Horses; the Father took the Son by the hand, and led him into the Hall, and set him next him, and beheld him, and said: Tell me now how it is with your Masters: How have they instructed you these many years since I saw you: But he bowed down his head again, and spake not. The Father said, Wherefore speak ye not to me. When the Emperess heard that the Emperors Son was come, she was right joyous, and said, I will go see him. She apparelled her self with rich attire, and took with her two of her

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Gentlewomen, and went whereas the Emperour was sitting with his Son, and sat her down by the Child: and she said to the Emperour, Is this your Son that hath been nourished with the seven Wise Masters; and he said it is my Son, but he speaketh not: she said, Deliver to me your Son, and if ever he speak, I shall make him. Then said the Emperour, Rise and go with her: the Son did reverence to his Father as though he said, I am ready to accomplish your will: and so he went with her.

How the Empress led Dioclesian the Emperours Son with her into a Chamber, to make good Cheer with him, the which he withstood.

The Empress led him with her into the Chamber and commanded all others to avoid, and set him by her before her bed-side, and said: O my best beloved Dioclesian, I have heard much of your person and beauty; but now I am glad that I may see that which my heart coveteth and loveth: For I have caused your Father to send for you, that I might have solace and joy of your person, wherefore right heartily I give you knowledge that I do your love unto this day have kept my Virginity: speak to me therefore, and let us go to bed together: but he gave her no answer. She seeing that, said to him: O good Dioclesian, which hath the hall of my Son, why speak ye not to me, or at least
He w

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shew me some token of love: what shall I doe
 speak to me, I am ready to perform your will:
 And when she had thus said, she embraced him,
 and would have kissed his mouth, but he turned
 his visage from her, and in no wise would con-
 sent: then she said again, O Son, wherefore do
 you thus with me? let us sleep together, & then
 shall ye perceive, that for your love I have kept
 my Virginity: but he turned his visage again
 from her; he seeing that of her he was ashamed,
 shewing unto him her naked Body and Breasts,
 saying: Behold my Son, what Body I have,
 it is at your will, a servant to your pleasure:
 give me your consent, or it shall be hard for me
 to depart hence in my right mind. He shewed
 her no manner of love, but as much as he could
 withdrew himself from her. When she saw
 that, she said: O my best Son, if it please you
 not to consent unto (yet speak) perhaps for
 some reasonable cause? Lo, here is Pen, Ink,
 and Paper, then write your will, whether I
 may at any time hereafter trust in your love or
 not. The Child wrote as followeth. O Lady
 God forbid that I should defile my Fathers Or-
 chard: For I wot not what Fruit I should have
 of it: I know well that I should sin greatly in
 the sight of God, and also run in the maledic-
 tion of my Father; and therefore from henceforth
 I pray you provoke me no more thereto.

When she had seen and read the Writing,

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she tore it with her teeth: and rent her Clothe
to her Navel, and scratched her visage till
was all bloody, and cast from her all the orna-
ments of her head, and cryed out with a loud
voice: Come hither my Lords and help me, lest
this rude and evil body shame and ravish me.

How the Empress complained to the Emperor,
of the shame done unto her by his Son.

THe Emperoz being in the Hall, and hearing
the cry of the Empress, hastily run toward
her Chamber with many of his Knights and
Servants following him, to know the matter.
Then began the Empress to cry and speak to
the Emperoz in this wise: O my Lord, have
pity on me: behold this young man is not your
Son, but the foulest for Ribaldry and actions of
Luxury, that ever sin and heat put strength into.
For as you know, I led him into the Chamber,
and would have exhorted and caused him to have
spoken; I have done as much therefore as I can
or may; and whilest I moved him to have spo-
ken, he hath endeavoured himself with me to
have sinned; and because I would not consent
but withstood as much as I might to flee the
same, he hath made my visage all bloody, and
torn my Vesture and Ornaments off my head
as you may see; and if you had not soon come
unto my calling, he had ended in me, his most
soul

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soul and wicked appetite. When the Emperoz
 saw and heard this (filled with great malice and
 woodness) he commands his Servants to lead
 him to the Gallows and hang him. When the
 Lords heard thereof they said: Lord you have
 but this Son only, it is not good that ye thus
 slightly put him to death. The Law is ordain-
 ed for Transgressors: And if he must die, let
 him by the Law die, lest it be said that the
 Emperoz in his wrath, (without Law or Jus-
 tice) hath put his only Son to death. As the
 Emperoz heard this, he commanded him to be
 put in Prison till judgment was given against
 him. When the Emperess understood that the
 Child was not put to death, she wept bitterly,
 and would take no rest: when night came, the
 Emperoz entred into his Chamber to go to bed,
 and found his Wife sorrowing: to whom he
 said: O my dear Lady, for what cause are ye
 sorrowful? She answered, Know ye not that
 your accursed Son hath done me so much shame
 and dishonoured you, that you commanded him
 to be hanged, and yet he liveth, and your word
 is not performed, nor my shame revenged: to-
 morrow (said the Emperoz) he shall die by the
 Law: then said she, shall he so long live: then
 might it happen to you as it did to a Burgo-
 of Rome, of whom an example is mentioned:
 the Emperoz said, I pray you shew me this ex-
 ample: that shall I do gladly said the Emperess.

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The first Example of the Emprcs.

In the City of Rome was a Burgels, which had a fair Garden, wherein he had a noble Tree, the which every year brought forth fruit of good vertue, for whosever eat thereof that were sick of any manner of sickness, or leprosie, he should soon be whole, and receive his sight.



It happened on a day as the Burgels went into the Garden to visit the Tree, he espied under the Tree a fair young Imp, and called to him the Gardiner, and said: my friend of this young Imp I give thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better Tree than this is. The Gardiner said: I shall it gladly do. Another time the Burgels came again into his Garden to visit the young Plant, and it appeared unto him

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him that it grew not so much as it should do ; and he said to the Gardiner : how may this be, and he said, it is no wonder, for this great Tree hath so great arms and branches, that the air may not come to the root of the young Tree, then said the Burgess, cut and hew off the arms and the boughs, that the air may come thereto. The Gardiner did as he commanded. The Burgess came again another time to see the young Plant, and thought that it grew never the better, and said to the Gardiner : what is it that letteth this Plant not to grow now ? and he said I suppose the height of the old Tree letteth the Sun, that the Rain may not come thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then said the Master unto him, hew down that Tree to the ground, for I hope of this Plant to have a better than ever that was. The gardiner hearing his Master, he wed down the Tree, and as soon as this was done, the young Plant perished, and came to nought : wherefore there came great harm ; for when the poor sick people perceived that the Tree was destroyed (they cursed all them that were Councillors and helpers thereto) by the which they often times were healed and cured of their infirmities : then said the Emperess to her Lord, understand ye what I have said : he answered, yea right well : then said she, I will declare the meaning of what I have said.

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The Declaration of the Example.

THis Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your most Noble Person, how that with your counsel and help, many pooz and sick folks are greatly comforted: and the young Imp which is grown under the great Tree, is your accursed Son, that now by cunning beginneth to grow, and studieth first, how he might cut off the arms and boughs of our might, and how to win him the Land, and favour of the people, yea and more unnaturally, immagineth to destroy your person, that he may himself reign, but what shall then ensue thereof? All pooz and feeble people shall curse them who might have destroyed your Son, and have not yet done it: Therefore I counsel you, whilst you are in power, that ye destroy him, lest the curse of the people fall upon you. Then said the Emperoz, ye have given me good counsel, to morrow I shall condemn him to the vilest death that can be thought upon. When the day was, the Emperoz went and sat in Judgment, and commanded his Servants to lead his Son to be hanged with Trumpets sounding in token of death. As the Emperozs Son was led through the City, the common people began to weep and cry, Alas the only Son of the Emperoz is led towards his death: And therewithal came Pantillas the first Master riding upon a Horse. When the Child saw

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him, he bowed his head, as though he said,
 mind me: when you come before my Father,
 so how I am led towards the Gallows. Then
 the Master said to the Servants: Make no
 haste, for I hope, by the Grace of God, this day
 to deliver him from death. Then said all the
 people: O good Master haste you to the Palace,
 and save your Disciple; he smote his horse
 with his spurs till he came to the Palace, and
 kneeled to the Emperor, and did him reverence.
 To whom the Emperor said: it shall never be
 to thee good; who answered, I have deserved a
 better reward. The Emperor said, thou liest;
 for I delivered my Son to thee well mannered,
 and now he is brought home dumb, and hath
 sought to work his will, to the shame of my ver-
 tuous Empress, and the dishonour of his Tea-
 chers. Bed for ever; therefore this day shall he
 die; and ye shall die a shameful death. Then said
 the Master, Lord, so much as your Son speak-
 eth not, the cause thereof God knoweth, and
 without cause it is not, as you shall understand;
 and whereas you say, that he would have com-
 mitted the sin of inforcement on your Empress,
 I shall say to you of a truth: He hath been in
 our company to the space of sixteen years, and
 we never could perceive such an abuse by him:
 Therefore my dear Lord, I shall shew you
 one thing, that if you put your Son to death for
 the words of your wife, it shall happen to you
 worse

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worse than to a Knight that killed his be-
 Grey-hound, (through the words of his wife)
 which saved his Son from death. Then said the
 Emperour to the Master: tell me that exam-
 ple. The Master said, Lord, that shall I not
 for before I shall end, your Son might be dead
 and then without hope shall I rehearse it: but
 if it please you this noble Example to hear, say
 again your Son till to morrow; and as you
 think by reason, then do with him your plea-
 sure. As the Emperour heard that, anon he wol-
 led the Child to be called again: and in the
 mean time he set him in prison, while the Ma-
 ster finished his Tale, and then began in the
 manner following:

The first Example of the first Master.

There was a valiant Knight had one only
 Son, as you have, which he loved so much
 that he obtained for his keepers three Houn-
 ders; the first should give him luck, and lead
 him; the second wash him, and keep him
 clean: And the third should bring him to
 sleep and rest. The Knight had also a Grey-
 hound and a Falcon, which he also loved right
 well. The Grey-hound was so good, that he ne-
 ver ran at any Game, but he took it, and held
 till his Master came. And if his Master bid
 him to go to any Battle, if he should
 spend therein anon as he should mount upon

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the Greyhound would take his Horses
in his mouth, and draw backward, and cry
and howle marvellously loud. By these signs
and the observations thereof, the Knight did
always understand, that his journey should have
very ill success. The Falcon was so gentle,
and wary, that he was never cast off to his
prey, but he took it.

The same Knight had great pleasure in Joust-
ing and Tourney, so that upon a time, under
the Castle he proclaimed a Tournament, to the
which came many great Lords and Knights.
The Knight entered into the Tourney, and his
squire went with his Maidens to see it, and as
they went out, after went the Monks, and
the Child lying in the Cradle in the Hall,
where the Greyhound lay near the Wall, and
a Hawk or Falcon standing upon a perch.
In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, to
the name of the Castle unknown, which when
perceived they were all absent, he put his
head out of his hole, and when he saw none but
the Child in the Cradle, he went out of his hole,
towards the Cradle, to have slain the Child.

The Noble Falcon perceiving that, and be-
coming the Greyhound that was sleeping, made
a sound with her wings, that the Grey-
hound awoke and rose up; and when he saw the
Serpent near the Child, upon against him he
sprang, and they both fought so long, that the

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Serpent had grievously wounded the Greyhound, that he bled so sore, that the Earth and the Cradle was bloody. The Greyhound when he felt himself grievously wounded, starts fiercely upon the Serpent, and fought so sore, eagerly, that betwixt them the Cradle was vertost with the Child, the bottom upward,



the Cradle having four pummels, which lay upon, they saved the Child from having hurt: what can be more exprest to make good wonder in this preservation of this Child: great pain the Greyhound flew the Serpent, laid him down again in his place, and licked his wounds. Anon after as the Justs and Toss was done, the Adversers came first into the Castle, and saw the Cradle turned the

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upon the earth, compassed round about
 with blood, and the Greyhound also bloody, and
 lay among themselves, that the Greyhound
 had slain the Child: and were not so wise as to
 turn up the Cradle again with the Child, to
 see what was befallen: and said, let us run a-
 way, lest that our Master should lay the blame
 upon us, and slay us. Running away they
 met the Knights wife, and she said unto them,
 Wherefore make ye this sorrow, and whether
 will you run? Then they said, O Lady, woe be
 to us, and to you! Why said she, what is hap-
 pened? shew me: the Greyhound, they said, that
 our Lord and Master loved so well, hath devour-
 ed and slain your Son, and lieth by the Wall
 full of blood. As the Lady heard this she pre-
 sently fell to the earth, and began to weep piti-
 fully, and said: Alas! O my dear Son, are ye
 thus slain? What shall I now do, that I have
 mine only Son thus lost? Herewithal came in
 the Knight from the Journey, beholding his
 Lady crying, he demanded wherefore she made
 so great lamentation? she answered: O my
 Lord, the Greyhound you loved so much hath
 slain your only Son, and lieth by the Wall satia-
 ted with the blood of the Child. The Knight
 exceeding angry went into the Hall; the Grey-
 hound rose to meet him, and did lawn upon him
 as he was wont: But the Knight drew out
 his Sword, and with one stroke smote off the

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Greyhounds head; then he went to the Chamber where the Child lay, and found his Son whole and by the Child, the Serpent lay slain; and divers signs, perceived the Greyhound kill'd the Serpent for the defence of my Child. Then with great sorrow he tore his hair, and said: Woe is me, that for the words of my wife I have slain my best Greyhound, which saved my Childs life, and slain the Serpent; therefore I will put my self to penance, and he brake his sword in three pieces, and went towards the Holy Land, and abode there all the days of his life. Then said the Master to the Emperour, Lord understand ye what I have said: and he answered, right well. The Master said, if you put your Son to death for the words of your wife, it shall happen to you worse than it did to the Knight for his Greyhound. The Emperour said, ye have shewed me a fair Example: without doubt this day my Son shall die. Then said the Master, if you do so, you shall be wisely; and I thank you, that you have spared him this day for my sake.

The second complaint of the Empress. A sorrow mingled with much cunning and falsehood.

When the Empress heard the Child was not yet dead, she began to weep bitterly, and sat her down on the earth in ashes,

would not lift up her head. When the Emperoz
 heard that, he entred the Chamber, and said un-
 to her: O good wife, wherefore make you all
 this sorrow, and trouble your self so much? She
 said, ask ye that of me? Know you not what
 shame I have suffered of your unhappy Son, and
 so have promised me that you would see justice
 to be thereupon executed on him, and yet he li-
 veth? Alas troth it will happen to you as to a
 shepherd and a Boar. The Emperoz said, I
 may you shew me that Example for my learn-
 ing: she said yesterday I shewed you one, and
 saw no good effect that came thereof: To what
 end shall I now do the like? Nevertheless I
 shall declare this noble Example unto you, as
 hereafter you shall heare.

The Second Example of the Empress.

There was sometime an Emperoz which
 had a great Forrest, wherein was a wild
 Boar, so cruel and fierce, that he devoured men
 going through the Forrest. The Emperoz there-
 fore being right heavy, proclaimed throughout
 his Dominions, That whosoever could slay
 the Boar, should have his only Daughter to his
 Wife, and the Empire after his death. As this
 was in all places proclaimed, there was not one
 man found that durst give the adventure. But
 there was a Shepherd, who thought in himself,
 might I the Boar overcome and slay, I should

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not only aduancee my self, but also my generation and kindred. So he took his Shepherds staff in his hand, went to the Forrest, and as the Boar had of him a sight, he new towards the Herdsmen, but he for fear climbed into a Tree, and then the Boar began to bite and gnaw the



Tree, so that the Herd thought shortly he would have overthrew it. This Tree was loaden with plenty of fruit, and the Herd gathered thereof, and cast them to the Boar, in omuch that when he was filled therewith, he laid him down to sleep, which when the Herd perceived, he by little and little descended the Tree, and with the one hand clawed the Boar, and with the other held him about the Tree, and seeing the Boar slept very soundly, drawing out his knife,

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smote the Boar to the heart, and killed him, and shortly after wedded the Emperors Daughter: and after the death of her Father, he was made Emperour. Then said she, my Lord, wot ye not what I haue said: he said, right well: Then said she, this mighty Boar betokeneth your most noble Person, against whom may no man withstand, neither by wisdom, nor strength. The Shepherd with his Staff, to the person of your ungracious Son, who with his Staff of cunning, beginneth to play with you, as the Herdsman clawed the Boar, made him sleep and after killed him. In the same manner, the Masters of your Son, by those false Fables and Narrations claw you, and close with you, untill your Son slay you, that he may reign. Then said the Emperour: God forbid they should do to me, as he did to the wild Boar; and he said unto her: this day my Son shall die; and she answered, if you do so, then do ye wisely. Then the Emperour the second time sitting in Judgment, commanded to lead him to the place of Execution appointed for that purpose. Whildest he was going, the second Master came before the Emperour, doing him great reverence, as before he shewed in the coming of the first Master, to whom the second Master said: O my Lord and Emperour, if you should slay your Son for the words of your Wife, it shall happen worse to you, than it did to

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to a certain Knight, which for the words of his wife was unjustly put upon the Pillory. The Emperour said, O good Master, tell me how that happened: and he said, My Lord I shall not say it, unless you will call your only Son from the death, until the Example be told, which if it turn not you from your purpose then your will be fulfilled: then the Emperour commanded the Child should be called again: And after this manner following, the second Master began to tell.

The Example of the second Master.

IN a City was an ancient Knight, which wedded a young wife and fair, as ye have done whom he loved above all earthly things: The Knight was a very circumspect and careful Husband, insomuch that every night he locked the door with his own hands, and laid the keys under his Beds-head. In that City was a Law or Custom, that at a certain hour in the night a Bell was used to be rung, that after the ringing of the said Bell, if any man or woman were by the Watch-men found about the streets, all that night they should be kept in Prison, and on the morrow set upon the Pillory, that all people might behold them.

The said Knight had little lust of earthly deeds, to perform the desires & appetites of his young wife

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wife : wherefoze every night she having a Pas-
 ramour, her Husband sleeping, took the keys
 from under his Beds head and went to her
 Love ; and when she came again, laid the keys
 under her Husbards head ; and thus they played
 many time.

It happened upon a night that the Knight
 awaked from his sleep, and missed his wife, and
 the keys under his Beds-head, whereupon he
 rose up and went unto the doore, and found
 them open, the which he bolted fast within, and
 went up again into his Chamber, & looked out
 of the window towards the Street : and when
 it was near the third Cocks crow, his wife
 came from her best Beloved, and found the
 doore shut and bolted within : then was she sor-
 rowful : Nevertheless she knocked to have come
 in. Then spake the Knight out of the win-
 dow, O thou most wicked and unclean wife,
 now I know that many times thou hast forsak-
 en my Bed, and gone and done Adultery ; now
 thou shalt stand until the Bell be rung, that the
 Watchmen may take thee, and do with thee
 according to the Law. His wife answered : My
 Lord, why do you lay that to me : For in verie
 troth, the cause of my being abroad was for no
 ill, but I was by my Mothers Maid fetch-
 ed in the night ; and when I saw you sleep so
 sweetly, I durst not amake you, because ye are
 old, and therefore I took the keys and went to
 my

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my Mother who is sore sick, that I fear to
morrow she must be anointed, or annihilated:
Notwithstanding because I would not you of-
fend, I have hasted again unto you, and have
left her lying in great pain; therefore I pray
you for the love of God, let me in before the
Bell ringeth. The Knight answered: ye shall
not come in, you must abide there until the Bell
ringeth, and untill the Watchmen come and
take you: then said she, that would be to you,
and to me, and unto all our friends and kindred
a great shame; therefore for the reverence of
Almighty God let me in. Then said he, have
in thy mind, evil and false Wife, how oftens-
times thou hast forsaken my Bed and done A-
dultery; it is much better thou suffer shame,
and bewail for thy sins here in this world, than
to suffer pain in Hell, She said again to him:
I pray you for the love of him that was cruci-
fied, and died on the Cross, have mercy on me.
The Knight said, thou labourest in vain, for
thou shalt carry the coming of the Watchmen.
She hearing that, said: my Lord, ye know by
this doo standeth a Well, if you let me not come
in, I shall there drown my self rather than all
my friends should be ashamed for me: then
said he, would to God thou hadst been drowned
long before thou camest in my Bed. As they
thus spake the Moon went down, and all was
very dark: then said she, if it will be no other-
wise

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wife, I shall drown my self; but yet before, like a true Christian woman, I will make my Testament: First, I bequeath to God my soul, and my body to be buried in the Church of St. Peter: and all other things and goods that God hath sent me, I give you, to dispose for my soul after your discretion. And when she had thus said, she went unto the Well, and there lying a great stone, with both her arms she lift up, and said: Now I drown my self, and so cast the



stone down into the Well, and went again hastily and stood by the door. The knight hearing the noise, cryed with a very loud voice: Alas alas, my sweet wife is drowned, and hastily came down, and ran to the Well. And when she saw the door open, presently she entered, and lockt

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Locked the dooꝛ, and went up into the Cham-
 ber, and lay and looked out of the Window.
 The knight stood by the Well, and wept bitter-
 ly, and said: Woe to me, I have now lost my best
 beloved Wife; cursed be the time that I made
 fast this dooꝛ against her. When the Lady heard
 that, she said, O thou cursed and old Gypsard
 why standest thou here at this time of the
 night? was not my body sufficient? Where-
 fore do you go thus every night to your Harlots
 and leave my bed? As he heard the voice of his
 Wife he was right glad, and said: Blessed be
 God that yet she is not drowned: But my good
 Lady, wherefore do you lay such things against
 me: I thought to have chastised you, and there-
 fore I locked the dooꝛ, but in no wise I intend-
 ed to your peril: ye know well what sorrow
 I made for you, when I heard you fall into the
 Well; and therefore I came, thinking to have
 helped you. Whereupon she said, thou liest, I
 never committed such faults as thou layest to
 me, but it appeareth by a common Proverb, he
 that is guilty or culpable himself of a sin, judg-
 eth every man to be in the same; or else, the
 Father never sought the Son in the Oven ex-
 cept he had been therein himself. In like case
 conceivest thou a false surmise of me: But one
 thing I promise thee, thou shalt abide there till
 the Watchmen come, and the Bell be rung,
 that they may lead thee before the Judges, to

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hide and suffer the Law. Then said the Knight: Wherefore lay ye such things to me that am old, impotent, and unworthie to delight in such a game? I have dwelt long in this City, and never was defamed, therefore let me in, what to me: or your self you do no shame. She said: ye say in vain, it is better ye fore-think your sin in this World, than in Hell: Dene in mind what the Wife man saith: A poor man Proud, a rich man a Lye, and an old man a Fool, God hateth: so be you, a Fool and Rich. What need you to flander me, and cannot be content when you have the flower of my youth at your pleasure, but yet runnest to Barlots, and therefore it is the great grace of God, that you have time to forsethink it, lest you should be damned for more sins: therefore suffer some penance patiently. The Knight said: O my best beloved Lady, although it be so: God is merciful, and asketh nothing of a sinner, but that he amend his life, and do penance for his sins: Now let me in, and I will make amends. She said: What Devil made you to good a Preacher: but yet you come nat in. As they thus make the hell rung: then he intreated her very fervently saying: Now suffer me to come in, that I be not ashamed for ever. She answered, The ringing of the Bell doth portend the health of your soul. And as this was said, presently came the Watch-men about the City, and

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and found the Knight standing in the street and said to him: O good man, it is not good that ye stand here in this hour of the night. As he heard this voice of the Watchmen, he said, Good Fellows avenge me on that old accursed Whore-hunter, for ye know whose daughter am: this accursed old man is wont every night to leave my Bed, and go to his Whores, I have long forboyn him, and would not complain of him to my friends, but I trusted that he would have amended his mis-rule, but it helpeth not. Therefore punish him after the Law, that all such old dotards may take example by him. When the Watchmen took him, and all night chastised him in Prison, and on the morrow put him on the Pillory. Now said the Master to the Emperoz, Lord have you understood what I have said: and he said right well. Then said the Master, if you put to death your Son, by the instigation of your wife, it shall chauce unto you worse than to the Knight.

The Emperoz said, she was the worst woman that ever I heard of; that so falsly brought her Husband to shame and rebuke: I say, Master, for this example my Son shall not die this day. The Master said unto him, if you do so, you are wisely, and hereafter you shall joy: so I commit you to God, and thank you for your patient hearing, and sparing of your Son: and so departed.

The third complaint of the Emperors, more full
of cunning and sorrow than the former.

When the Emperors heard the Child was
not dead, the worst Murther, and came to
her privy Chamber, and nose her skin with her
nails, and with a hundred eyes, Alas, that
ever I was born, that I should be as a King's Daugh-
ter should be thus, increased and shamed; and
can have no remedy. Her Gentlewoman hear-
ing this, went and shewed it to the Emperor,
and he went unto her, and comforted her saying,
O Lady, weep not so, for to be honest you need
not be unkind; the love that I owe unto you,
maketh me more sorrowful than the torment of
death: Good lady, the inward love of your heart
hath hitherto prohibited me, that I have not
returned into my Country to my Father; but
I fear should do so, it might hurt your
heart: for he is mighty to honour his wife
richer, and to revenge my quarrel in such wise
as you might repent it. Whereunto the
Emperor, let that pass out of your mind, nor
repent it any more, for as long as I live, I shall
never fail you. And she said Alas, I fear you
may not long live; but I fear it may happen
to you, as it befel to a knight and his son, who
would not bury his fathers head in the Church
yard, yet his father died for him. When said
the Emperor, shew me the Example, of such a
D

would

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would not bury his Fathers head; she said,
Will do it for your profit.

The Third Example of the Empress.

In the City of Rome there was a Knight
which had two Daughters and one Son. The
Knight had such delight in Hunting, Jousting
and Tourney, that all things he might win
get in, he spent thereupon. In that time lived
an Emperor named Octavian, which in riches
of Gold and Silver exceeded other Kings and
Princes, in so much that he had a Tower full
of Gold, and ordained a Knight to have the
keeping and charge thereof. This Knight by
Hunting, Jousting, and other idle Games, came
to so great poverty, that he was forced out of
the extremity of his adverse fortunes, to sell
his Heritage; and called to him his Son, and
said, My Son, it becometh me of your counsel
for necessity compelleth me to sell mine Heri-
tage, or else to find some other way, whereby
I may live: For if I should sell mine Heri-
tage, you and your Sisters would perish. The
son said, Father, if you can find any man-
ner of means, without selling your Heritage,
I should be ready to help you. The Father
said, I have thought on a good counsel: The
Emperor hath a great Tower full of Gold;
might we let us with Instruments dig
them through the Tower, and let us take of

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Gold as much as shall suffice us. Whereunto the Son answered, that counsel cannot be amended: for it is better of the Emperors Gold to take (to help us) then to sell our Heritage.



So they arose in the night, and went to the Tower, and with Instruments made an hole thorow the Wall, and took as much Gold as they could both carry away at that time: And the Knight paid his debts, and haunted again Justs as he did before, until all was consumed. In the mean while the keeper of the Treasure went into the Tower; and when he saw the Treasure stolen, and a great hole made through the wall, he began to wax sore afraid, and went unto the Emperour, and shewed what had befallen. To whom the Emperour said all angry, What

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needs thou to shew me that? Have I not delivered to thee my treasure: therefore of thee will ask it. Anon as the keeper heard that, went to the Tower again, and set before the hole a great Vessel full of Pitch melted, with ther Gims of subtilty, that no man might come in at the hole, but he must needs fall into the Vessel, and if he had therein fell, he could no more come out of it. Not long after the Father had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went again with his Son to steal more Gold: As as the Father went in first, anon he was fallen into the Vessel full of Pitch to the neck, and when he saw he was taken, and could not get out, he said to his Son, follow me now for if thou dost, thou canst not escape by any means. Then said the Son, God defend that should not help you: For if you are found, you are all dead: and if you may not be holpen, I shall seek counsel how you may be delivered. The Father said, there is no other counsel but with thy Sword smite off my head, and as my Body is found without an Head, no man shall know me, and so thou and my Daughters may escape this worldly pain and death. The Son said: Father ye have given the best counsel: For if it were so that any man might perceive any knowledge of you, none of us all shall escape death: and it is expedient that your head be smitten off.

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And he drew out his Sword, and smote off his
 Fathers head, and cast it into a pit, and then
 went and shewed unto his Sisters all the mat-
 ter: who many days after pively bewailed the
 death of their Father. After this the Keeper of
 the Treasury came into the Tower, and found
 a Body without a head: whereas he wondered
 sore, and shewed it to the Emperoz: to whom
 he said: Bind the Body to the Tail of an
 Horse, and so draw him thorow all the streets
 of the City, and diligently take good heed if ye
 hear any cry or weeping: Wheresoever ye do
 hear that, he was Lord of the House: take all
 them and the Body, draw them to the Gallows
 and hang them. The which the Emperors
 servants fulfilled according to his command-
 ment. And as they came against the House
 of the dead Knight, the Daughters seeing the
 Body of their dead Father, made a marvelous
 great shriek, and wept piteously. And as their
 Mother heard that, he wounded himself with
 a knife, so that great plenty of blood came
 out of his wound: The Officers when they
 heard the cry, entred the House, and demanded
 the cause of their clamour. Then answered
 the Son, they lament because I am thus
 wounded: for when my Sisters saw the blood so
 abundantly go out, as you see, they began to
 weep and cry: and when the Officers saw the
 wound, they believed his words, and so went and

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hang'd the Knights Body upon the Gallows, where he hung a long time, and his Son would neither take his body down from the Gallows, nor yet bury his head. The Emperess said, understand ye what I have said: the Emperess said, right well.

The Declaration of the Example.

Then spake the Emperess thus: My Lord, fear it will so chauce to you and to your Son: the Knight for the love of his Son was made poor, and first he committed Theft, and brake the Tower: secondly caused himself to be beheaded, that his Children should have no shame. After the Son cast his head into the Dike, and buried it not, neither in Church nor Church-yard; and his body he suffered to hang still on the Gallows; if he could not have taken it down in the day, he might well have done it in the night. In the same manner labour night and day, that ye may promote your Son to Honour and Riches, but without doubt he labourereth for your destruction, that he may reign after you in your Empire. Therefore advise you speedily to take away his life, who living would suddenly prove the destruction of yours. The Emperour said: you have given me a good example. The Knights Son, who he had smitten off his Fathers head, would not bury it: Without doubt my Son shall not

to to me. Then anon he commanded his Offi-
 cers, that they should lead him to the Gallows,
 and they all obey'd his commandment hasti-
 ly. As they led him through the streets; the
 people made a great noise and lamentation,
 crying, Alas, alas, the only Son of the
 Emperour is led again towards the Gallows;
 and as they led him the third Master named
 Craton, came riding upon an Horse; and as
 the Child saw him, he bowed down his head to
 him, and as though he had said, have mercy upon
 me. The people cryed, saying: O good Master
 make haste and save your Disciple: so he smote
 his Horse with his Spurs, and hasted to the
 Palace. And when he came before the Em-
 perour, he honourably saluted him. Who said,
 thy coming hither shall nothing avail thee,
 for I think it long until I be avenged on thee.
 The Master replied, I hoped at my coming to
 have been welcome, and to have had a better re-
 ward, and not so to be rebuked. The Emperour
 said, as ye have deserved, so shall it be to you.
 To whom he said, My Lord, what have I de-
 served? The Emperour said, ye right well de-
 serve death: for I delivered you my Son
 well speaking, and well mannered, to be in-
 formed and taught, and ye have delivered him
 again into my dumb, and a Ribaule. To
 which the Master answered: in that you say he
 is dumb, that I commit to God: For he maketh

the dark's to speak and deaf to hear. But in the
 yea! say he would have enforced your wife, the
 should gladly know, if any creature hath seen
 that to foul here is no malice above the malice of
 a woman and shall I shall prove danger of Ex-
 ample, that a glomantic full of falsity and un-
 knowable words: and for a put to death your Son
 to the midst of your wife, it shall happen unto
 you as it doth any other man and his wife, and
 this I be which he loved marvellously. To whom
 the Emperor said: I pray you tell me how the
 women were full of wight and leasings, who say
 I shall not show it. But if you will first call a
 gain your Son from death, then at your plea-
 sure I shall be in the Example. Then the Em-
 peror made his Son to be called again and put
 in prison. And the Master began to tell the
 Example in manner following.

The Example of the Third Master

The second was in a City a rich Burgeess that
 had a Wyfe, which he loved so well, that e-
 very day he taught her to speak Latin and He-
 brew; and when he had learned her perfectly to
 speak these two languages, all that she saw
 and heard, she shewed and told her Master.

This young man had a fair young wife, as
 pe have, like which he loved full well, but he on
 the contrary loved him not, because he was not
 of that flacciduous performance, to answer her

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lusts according to her desires: Therefore she had another young man, that she loved above her Husband: and always as her Husband was out of the Town, about his Merchandize and other business, she sent for her best beloved, that they might make good cheer together. The



Pye as she espied that, told it to her Mother at his coming home, in such a manner as the noise ran all over the City of her Adultery: wherefore her Husband many times braboles and chide with her, she answered him, ye belise your cursed Pye, which as long as she liveth, will alway make betwixt us variance and discord: and he said, the Pye cannot lye; for what she seeth and heareth, that she telleth me, and therefore I believe her more than you.

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It fortuned that this man went into a
 Country, about his Merchandize, and as
 as he was gone, his Wife sent for her Friend
 and Love, to solace and make good cheer
 him: but he durst not come by day-light,
 abode until the Evening, lest he should be
 of the people, and when the night was come
 he knocked at the Gate, and she was ready
 opened it. He said, I fear that the cursed
 shall accuse me; for by her is come great
 her upon us thorow all the City. Enter in,
 said, boldly and fear not. As they should
 thorow the Hall, where the Pye was in
 Cage, she heard him say these words, O
 most beloved, I fear me greatly, lest that
 Pye should betray us: and as the Wife heard
 that, she said, be still fool, it is dark, she
 not see you. Then the Pye hearing that, said
 I see thee not, I hear thy voice, and thou
 wrong to my Master, for thou sleepest with
 Mistress: and when my Master cometh, I
 tell him. The young men hearing that, said
 told I not you, that the Pye would discover
 and the Wife said, fear not, for this night
 will be avenged on the Pye, and so they
 crept into the Chamber, and slept together
 night. About mid-night the Wife arose,
 called her Maid, and said, fetch me a Ladder
 and set it up to the roof of the house, that
 may avenge me on the Pye. The Maid

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and they went up both, & made a hole through
the covering of the house, right over the Wyre,
and there they cast Sand, Clay, Stones, and
Water upon the Wyre, insomuch that the poor
Wyre was almost dead. And on the morrow the
young man went out early at the back door.
When the good man was come home, as his
custom was, he went and visited the Wyre, and
said to her, O Wyre, my beloved Bird, tell me
how thou hast fared the while I have been out:
she said, Master, I will tell you tidings that
I have heard: your Wife as soon as you were
gone, by the night time she let a man come in;
and as soon as I heard that, I told him that I
should shew it you at your coming home, yet she
led him into her Chamber, and slept with him
all night: You ask me also how I have done
in your absence, and I say to you of a truth
that I was never so nigh my death, as I was
that same night, with Snow Hail, and Rain,
that fell upon me so long together, that I
was almost left for dead. The Wife when
she heard that, said to her Husband: Sir, you
believe your Wyre, now you may hear what she
saith, she complaineth that in the same night
there fell so much Snow, Hail and Rain upon
her, that she was almost dead: and yet there
was none of them that same night, for there
was not in the year a clearer and fairer night
than it was: and therefore from henceforth be-
lieve

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Heve her not. Then went the good man to his
Neighbours, and asked of them if in that night
were any Tempest or Rain: they answered,
and some of them walked that night, and in all
that night there was not seen a fairer night.
Then went he to his house and said to his wife,
I have found you in a truth; for the night was
very fair and cleare, as I understood of your
Neighbours. You may now know of a truth,
said she, that the Pye is a lier with her leasings;
he hath sown much discord betwixt us: more-
over, I am defamed through the City by his
false leasings; Then the Murgels went unto the
Pye, and said, wherefore hast thou made lies
betwixt me and my wife: is this the thanks I
have for the meat that I was wont to give thee
with mine own hands every day: and thou hast
thereby brought my Wife into great disgrace
through all the City. The Pye answered,
God knoweth I cannot lie, for that which I saw
and have heard I shewed you. Then said he,
thou liest, thou hast said unto me, that in the
same night was hail, snow, and rain, that thou
hadst hear hand lost thy life, which is false,
and therefore from henceforth thou shalt make
no more leasings nor discord betwixt me and my
wife; and so took the Pye and brake her neck.
When as the Wife saw that, she was glad
and said: now thou hast done well; now may
we all our days live in rest and peace. And
so will

when

When he had slain the Pye, he took up and laid
in the top of his house a Ladder, and a Vessel
with water, sand, and stones: and when he be-
held that, he perceived the falshood of his wife,
and cryed with a loud voice: woe to me, that for
my wifes words I have slain my Pye, and also
my solace and joy is lost, the which in all things
said to me truth. And as he had thus done, anon
for sorrow he left his Merchandize, and all his
house, and went towards the Holy Land, and ne-
ver returned home again to his wife. Then the
Master said to the Emperour, Sir, have you un-
derstood what I have said, he answered, right
well. The Master said, was not this a cursed
wiffe, that so by her falshood, deceit, and cunning,
caused the Pye to be slain: the Emperour said,
in treth she was full of fallshoods: it pitieth
me greatly to thinke upon the Pye, which for her
true saying lost her life. Verily I say unto you
that you have told me a very good Example,
therefore this day my Son shall not die. When
said the Master, Sir, you do wisely, and I thank
you that you have spared your Son this day for
my sake, and so to God I commend you and
yours.

The Fourth Complaint of an Emperour of
When the Emperours heard that the Child
was not dead, they made great noise, and
crying in such wise, that the wife heard thereof
the Palace, and said: woe unto me that ever I
was

was made Emperess; would to God I had
 when I was first brought into these parts.
 When the Emperoz heard that cry that
 made, he entred into the Chamber, and con-
 solted her as much as he could, and demanded
 the cause of her lamentation. Who said:
 mine own Lord, have you no wonder, though
 that I be in this sorrow and agony; for I
 your Wife, and in your company, by your Son
 I am ashamed; ye saw lately the bloody mark
 of his inforcement upon my tender flesh, as
 you have promised me, that he therefore should
 be hanged, and yet he lieth: wherefore should
 I not be sorry? The Emperoz answered:
 content and I shall do justice upon my Son
 morrow: I forbore him yesterday, at the re-
 quiring of one of his Masters by an Example.
 When said she, have you forbid to do justice
 one word: were it so, yet for a word ye should
 not let to do justice: and ye say, for the example
 of one Master ye have left it. I fear me
 shall happen to you and your Masters, as
 on a time it foruned unto an Emperoz, by
 his seven Wile Masters. The Emperoz said
 I pray you tell me that Example. She said
 to what intent should I labour in vain? I
 yesterday I shewed you a good Example, and
 shailed not: and whatsoever I shew you for
 your and profit, that the Masters of your
 turn to your destruction, as in the pre-
 cede-

example, I shall clearly shew unto you. To whom the Emperour said: O my best beloved Lady, shew me that example, by the same I may beware, for though in my clemency I gave me days benefit of life to my Son, I shall not therefore give him his life; for what's deferred is not forgotten. She said, gladly shall I shew it to your profit, and began to tell as followeth.

The Fourth complaint of the Emperess.

Sometimes there was in the City of Rome, Seven Wise Masters, by whom the Emperour was governed; and the Emperour that then was, did never attempt any thing without the Counsel of his Masters: whereupon they perceived that the Emperour was so affected to them, that without them he would not do any thing devised by their arts and cunning, that the Emperour should clearly see as long as he was in the Palace, but as soon as he was out, he should become blind; and so did they, that they might the more freely have the dealing themselves of all things that appertained to the Emperour; by which they won great profit and lack of goods: and after they had wrought the experiment, they could never change it, nor undo it afterwards: but the Emperour stood still blind many years: And the Seven Masters more and proclaimed throughout the Em-

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Empire, that if any man had dreamed, that
he should come unto them with a Florent
Gold, or Silver, and they would expound the
interpretation of his Dream: whereby, and
other in this means, they obtained much
substance and money of the people then the Em-
perors did. Sompon a time, when he sat at
Table with his Emperess, he began to sigh
sorrow in himself, and when she perceived that
she enquired diligently of him the cause. The
Emperors said, should it not be heavy and
rowful unto me, that I so long have been blind
and cannot see out of my Palace, and yet find
no remedye: to whom speak the Emperess
said: Lord hear my counsel, and it shall never
repent you, if you do thereafter. In your Court
you have seven Wise Masters, by whom passeth
all the Empire is governed: if you mark
shall find they are the cause of your blindness
and if it be so, they are worthy to die a most
shameful death: Wherefore heed my advice
first send for them, and shew to them your infir-
mity, and threaten them on their lives, that
they should find some speedy remedye to help you
of your sickness, and blindness. This coun-
pleased the Emperors well. And anon he sent
for the Masters, and when they were come, the
Emperors shewed unto them his infirmity, and
blindness, and charged them on pain of death
that they should presently seek some remedye

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ase him thereof. Then answered they: We
 desire of us a thing that is difficult to be done
 thus shortly, but give us respite for two days,
 and we will give you your full answer: The
 Emperour was there withal well contented.
 Then the seven Wise Masters went unto
 Counsel, how they might restore him his sight
 again, and in no wise could they find the
 means how to put away the blindness from the
 Emperour: wherefore they were all right sor-
 rowful, and said among themselves: Without
 we find a remedy, we are all but dead men.
 So they throughout all the Empire sought if
 they could find any Remedy or Counsel there-
 fore. It happened upon a time going through
 the City, in the midst thereof they found chil-
 dren playing, and after them came a man with
 a Talent of Florent of Gold, and said to them,
 O Wise Masters, this night have I dreamed a
 Dream, the interpretation whereof I would
 know: wherefore I pray you shew me
 what it signifieth, and take the Gold to you.
 That heard one of the Children (that played a-
 mongst the other) who said unto him, give me
 the Gold, and I will expound you the Dream.
 The man said: I dreamed this night, that
 in the midst of mine Orchard was a great
 spring of water, whereof came many small
 rivings: that all mine Orchard was full, and
 overflown with water. The child said, Take a
 C Spade

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Spade, and dig in the same place, where
thought that the water sprang out, and
shall ye find a hoard of Gold, so great, that
and your Children, and Lineage shall be
ever rich. The man did as the Child
shewed him, and found the Treasure.
Then went the man to the Child, meted by
pound weight of the Gold that he had found
for the interpretation of the Dream; but
would receive none, but committed him to
Prayers of the man. The seven Wise
Men, when they heard the Child had so
expounded the Dream, they said to him,
Child, what is your name? He answered
I am called Merlin. Then said the Wise
Men, we see surely great wisdom in you; we
shew you a great matter, of which we
gladly find a remedy. The Child said
me your matter. And they said, the Emperor
of Rome, as long as he is in the Palace, has
sight very clear without any impediment;
as soon as he is gone out of the Palace, he
is not so. Now if you can find the cause thereof
and give present remedy whereby he may be
restored, and have his sight, ye shall have
Reward and honour of the Emperor.
Answered the Child, I know as well the
cause of the blindness as the remedy. Then
said unto him, come with us unto the Emperor,
you shall be rewarded so largely, that

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pleased to whom the Child said, I am ready to go with you. And when they came with the Child before the Emperoz, they said unto him: Lord, lo here is the Child we have brought which shall fulfil your desire, touching the cause of your blindness, and the recovery of your sight. The Emperoz said: good Masters, will you take it upon you, that the Child will perform it: they all said, yea, for we are expert in wisdom. The Emperoz turned himself towards the Child, and said: Will you undertake to tell me the cause of my blindness, and the remedy: The Child answered, my Lord the Emperoz, lead me into your Bed-chamber, and there I will shew you what is to be done: and when he was therein brought, he said to his Servants: take the cloaths from off the Bed, and the apparel, and you shall see wonders; that when they saw a Well smoking that had seven Springs and Floods; which when the Emperoz saw, he marvelled greatly: the Child said, If this Well and without it be quenched ye shall never have your sight. The Emperoz said, how may that be: the Child said, but one way: The Emperoz said, shew us the means, and if it is possible, it shall be done, that I may recover my sight as well without as within. To whom the Child said: My Lord, the seven Springs of this Well are the seven Wise Masters, who hitherto have traitterously governed you,

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and your Empire, and have made you blind, that ye be without your Palace, that they your subjects by extortion might pill and pole, you seeing it. But they know not the Remedy, therefore hear now my counsel, and this



shall be quenched and extinct: Strike off the first Masters head, and anon ye shall see the first Spring quenched, and so by order, one after another till they are all beheaded, and anon the Springs with the Well shall be quenched, and ye shall have your sight, as ye had before, and when this was done, the Well with the seven Springs was vanished. And as the Emperor had his sight again, he made the Child a great Lord, and gave him great abundance of goods: then spake the Empress, My Lord

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And she ye well perceiued this Example, that I
ur to be told ye : and he said, yea, in the best wise,
ye had ye haue recited a worthy and good example.
Then said she : in the same manner your seven
Wise Masters intend to do with you with their
whole Narration, that your Son may reign over
your Empire, which God forbid.

The Declaration of the Example.

This Well is your Son, whereout floweth
seven Springs, that signifieth the seven Wise
Masters : which Son you may not destroy,
without the seven Wise Masters be brought to
nought : that done, this Well, that is your Son
shall his wiles, shall not escape, but let him
be of death, (which befits his shameful de-
serts, lest he have a help of his Masters) and
consequently the seven Masters, and so you
shall govern and guide your Empire in peace
and rest. The Emperour anon commanded
his Seruants to lead his Son to the Gallows,
on which they were loath to do. Then a great
multitude of people gathered with great noise
and bewailing, so that the fourth Master named
Malquidrake heard thereof, who leapt upon his
horse and hasted to the Palace, where he met
with his Disciple, and commended him unto
him ; and when he came before the Emperour,
and did his obeysance, the Emperour said : little

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thanks shall you have you old cursed
 for so ill teaching my Son. I delivered you
 Son well speaking, and in all things
 virtuous: but you have sent him home a
 Dumb, and a Ribaule, for he would have
 with my Wife by force: and therefore all
 forthwith shall be hang'd. Then said the
 ster, my Lord, I have not deserved so
 you, God knoweth why your Son speak
 not, in short time you shall perceive
 things, but the time is not yet come: You
 he would have oppressed your Wife, that is
 truth, noz proved; for neither for one single
 son should you judge your Son to death: if
 the words of your Wife you judge your Son
 die, it shall be worse to you than to a cer
 old Man and his Wife, and that I shall
 prove. To whom the Emperoz said: If
 you do with me, as sometimes Seven
 men did to an Emperoz. Whereupon said
 Master; the offence of one, noz of twenty,
 not sound to the rebuke of all other: but
 thing of a truth I shall shew you, that
 shall come to you, if ye this day put your
 to death for the words of your Wife, of
 I could shew a notable example. Then
 the Emperoz, Recite it. The
 said, if you will call your Son from death
 then will I rehearse the example, or else
 The Emperoz commanded he should be call
 again

gain: and desired the Master to say as here-
after followeth.

The Example of the fourth Master.

There was an old Knight, and a right wise
man that lived long without wife or child.
His friends oftentimes exhorted him to take a
wife.

The Knight thus counselled by his friends,
at last agreed unto them, and they gave him to
wife the Daughter of the Bishop of Rome,
that was rich and of comely feature; whom
when he saw he began to love marvelously
well, and when he had been married a certain
space and had no child; in the morning it hap-
pened that she went to the Church, where she
met with her Mother, who said: My Daugh-
ter, how pleaseth you your Marriage and your
Husband? She said: right vile, for you have
given me an old lame man, to my discontent-
ment in all respects, and I would you had the
same time buried me; for I had rather lie and
eat with the Swine, than with him, therefore I
may no longer thus endure, but I must needs
have another. When said the Mother: God
wills my dear Daughter: How long have I
been with your Father, and yet never med-
led with such foolishness? The Daughter
said: it is no marvel, for you both met in

your yough together, and the one took solace of the other, but I can of him receiue no manner of corporal pleasure, for he is cold, and on the Bed he lieth as still as a stone, or as a thing immovable. The Mother answered: if you love another, tell me what he is. The Daughter said, I will love a Priest: To whom the Mother said: it were better and less sin for you to love a Knight or a Squire: she said in short time he would be weary of me, and after do me shame, and so will not the Priest; for he will keep his own honour and counsel, as well as mine: and Spiritual men be more true to their Lovers than Secular men be. The Mother said: hear my counsel, it will be for your good: old folks are wily and fell; tempt your Husband first, and if you escape him without doing you harm or smiting, then love the Priest. The Daughter said, I may not so long abide. The Mother said: upon my blessing abide till you have proved. The Daughter said, upon your blessing I will abide till I have attempted: But first tell me how I shall prove him. The Mother said, he hath in his Orchard a tree which he loveth much, cause it to be smitten down while he is a hunting, and against his coming home, make him a fire therewith, and if he forgive you, then love the Priest. As she heard the counsel of her Mother she went home: to whom her Husband said, where have you

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you been so long: She answered: I have been
in the Church, where I met with my Mother,
and with her I have had a little talk: and so be-
gan properly to dissemble. After midday the
Knight rode forth to hunt: then she thinking
upon the counsel of her mother, went to the
Gardiner, and said: cut down this young Tree
newly planted, that I may make a fire thereof
to warm my Lord withal, at his coming from
Hunting, for it is a great wind, sharp and cold.
The Gardiner said, Madam, that I will not
do, for my Lord loveth this Tree better than he



doth all the other Trees: nevertheless I shall
gather wood enough to make a good fire, but in
any case this I will not hew down. As she heard
that, then boldly she took the Axe from the Gar-
diner,

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binner, and hewed down the Tree her self, and
 made the Gardiner with others to bear it home.
 At evening when her Lord came from Hunt-
 ing, he was very cold, and she made a great
 fire, and went to meet him, and set him a stool
 before the fire to warm him; and as he a little
 while had sitten, he perceived the Odour of the
 fire, and called the Gardiner, and said: I smell
 by this odour that the new plant burneth in the
 fire: the Gardiner said, Lord it is true, my
 Lady your Wife hath felled it down. The
 Knight said unto her, God forbid that my
 Plant should be cut down by you. She answered
 anon: Lord I have done it, knowing the wea-
 ther and you also cold, and therefore I have
 kindled this fire for your comfort. And as the
 Knight heard that, he looked angrily upon her,
 and said: O cursed woman, how wast thou
 barbarous, relentless and void of pity, as to hew
 down so gentle a young Tree, the which thou
 knowest it well, that I loved it above all my
 other Trees: When he had so said: she began
 to weep and excuse her self, and said: my Lord
 I have done it for your good, and do you take
 it grievously: and began to cry, wo, wo be to me.
 Anon as the Knight saw the weeping of his
 Wife, and heard the cause, he was moved with
 pity, and said unto her, cease your weeping and
 beware how you anger me any more, or trou-
 ble me in any thing I love. The next day early

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in the morning he went again to the Church-
yard, and met with her Mother coming home,
and they saluted each other. Then the Daugh-
ter said unto the Mother: O dear Mother, I will
love the Priest, for I have attempted my Lord,
as you countelled me, but all for nought, for he
anon forgave it; when he saw me a little weep.
Then said the Mother, though old men for one
time for give, they double the pain another
time, and therefore I counsel you, that you
yet once again tempt him. Then said the
Daughter, I may no longer abide for I suffer
so much pain for the love of the Priest, that
with my tongue I cannot tell it, therefore you
shall pardon me, I will no more follow your
counsel. Then said the Mother: for the love
that the Child should have unto the Mother,
attempt him yet once more for your Fathers
blessing; and then if you go quietly without
harm or beating, love the Priest in the name
of God. Then answered the Daughter, it is to
me great pain so long to abide; nevertheless
for the blessing of my Father, I will once more
attempt him: but tell me how I shall begin.
The Mother said, I understand that he hath a
little Hound that he loveth well and keepeth on
his bed, cast the hound with great might (before
his face) against the wall that it die, and if you
escape without a stripe, or he forgive it light-
ly, then in the name of God love the Priest: the
Daughter

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Daughter said, I will in all things do after your counsel, for there is no Daughter living at this day, that would more gladly have the blessing of Father and Mother than I: and so she had her Mother farewell, and went home again; and that day with great trouble of her heart she brought to the night: and when the night was come, she commanded the Bed to be covered with Purple and Cloth of Gold, whilst the Knight sat by the fire; and when the Bed was made ready, the little Hound as he was accustomed leapt upon the Bed, and she took him by the hinder legs, and with a malicious heart she cast him against the wall, that it lay still dead. When the good old Knight saw that, he was marvelous angry, and said with a loud voice to his Wife: O thou most cruel and spiteful of all wicked women, how couldst thou find in thine heart to kill that gentle Hound, that I loved so much? Lord, said she, have you not seen how he with his feet (coming out of the mire) bewrayed our Bed that is so precious covered with rich Cloathes. And the Knight said with much anger: know you not that I loved much better my little Hound than the Bed: When she heard that, she began pitiously to weep, and said: Who be to me that ever I was born, for all things that I do for the best, are turned to the worst. The Knight out of the treasure of his pity would

not

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not suffer the weeping of his Wife, but for that he loved her so well, said unto her: cease your weeping, for I forgive it you altogether; and I counsel you, beware how you displease me from henceforth: and so they went to bed together.

Upon the morrow the very early went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, to whom when she had done Reverence, as it behoved, she said: Mother, now will I love the Priest, for I have attempted my Husband the second time, and all things he hath suffered. The Mother said, O my dear Daughter, there's no cruelty or falshood above the cruelty of old Folks, and therefore once more probe him. To whom the Daughter answered: Mother, ye labour in vain; for if you will what, and how much pain I suffered for the Priests love, ye should help me if you love me: The Mother said, hear me Daughter this time, and I shall never let you more: think how you have sucked milk out of my Breasts, and the great pain I suffered at your Birth, by these pains, my dear Daughter, I charge you, deny not this good Petition, and I promise you no more to let you, nor hinder you of your content but rather to help you. Then answered the Daughter, it is to my great pain to abstain so long from the love of the Priest: nevertheless for the great charge you have laid to me, and for that

that ye have made a Vow no more to let me
 but to further me: Tell me how I might at-
 tempt him, and I shall once more adventure.
 The Mother said, I know on Sunday next he
 intendeth to have us all to Dinner, your Fa-
 ther and I, and all your Friends, with all the
 rest of the City, and when you are set in your
 place, and all the Meats are brought and served
 upon the Table, fasten your keys privily, that
 hang at your girdle, in the Table-cloth, and
 then feign to have forgotten your knife, and say
 these words openly: See what a short wit I am
 of, I have forgotten my knife in my Chamber.
 And then rise up hastily, and go, and the Cloth
 with all the Meats you shall overthrow upon
 the ground, and if you escape without pain,
 make a vow to God, I shall never let you after.
 The Daughter said, that shall I gladly do,
 and so took her leave and departed. The Feast
 day came, and all (as the Mother said) was done.
 The Servants covered the Table, all are set, and
 the Daughter lay over against her Lord, and
 when the Table was well served with Meats,
 and other things belonging, the Lady of the
 House said with a loud voice: See how forget-
 ful I am, I have left my knife in my Chamber,
 which I must fetch: And so rose up hastily and
 drew the Cloth with all the Meat upon it
 with her, with all the Gold Desserts, and the
 Salts fell upon the ground. The Knight
 was

were soze angry in heart, but dissembling be-
 fore the Guests, and commanded another Cloth
 and other Deats to be brought; and with joy
 saluted his Guests to eat and make good chear,
 so that they were all merry. The Feast, or
 Dinner done, they all gave thanks to the
 knight, and took their leaves, every man to-
 wards his own house. Upon the next day, in
 the morning the Knight rose early, and went
 to the Church to hear Service; after which he
 went to the Barber, and said unto him, Sir,
 are you expert in blood-letting, in what vain I
 will desire you? And he said, Sir, I am expert
 in what vain you can name in a mans body.
 The Knight said: I am content, come with
 me. And when he was come into the house, he
 entred his Chamber where his wife lay in bed,
 and said unto her: Rise up quickly. Then said
 she what shall I do up so early, it is not
 nine of the clock? The Knight said you must
 rise up, for you must be letten blood in both
 your arms. She said, I was neber letten blood
 and shall I now bleed? Then said the Knight,
 that is truth, and therefore you are a fool:
 Remember, first, he hewed down my Tre,
 another time you killed my little Hound,
 and but yesterday, you shamed me before all
 my Friends and Parents. If I should suffer
 you thus, for to go on, you would for ever
 shame me. The cause hereof I consider, you
 have

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have evil and wild blood within your body, and therefore I will that the corrupt blood be drawn out, that ye from henceforth shall put me to no more shame and anger: So caused to be made great fire; and she stood and cryed, and held up her hands towards Heaven, and said; My Lord forgive my trespasss, and have pity on me at this time, and I will never more offend you. The Knight said pray for no mercy; for the mercy that God hath wrought towards thee at this present, is this, that except thou holden thine arm straight, I shall soon have thy heart's blood; and said to the Barber, smite hard, and make a deep hole in her arm, or I shall give you a great stripe; then smote the Barber so sore, that the blood came abundantly out, and the Knight would not suffer him to stench it, until the time that she changed her colour in her visage; and as this was done, he had it to be stopped; and willed the Barber to smite the vein upon the other arm: Then she cryed with a very loud voice; My sweet Husband I pray have compassion on me, for now I die. The Knight answered, Wife, you should have thought on this before, ere you had done to me these three dispires. Then she held out her left arm, and the Barber smote thereon a great hole, that the blood came out right ugly, and he suffered her to bleed till her visage was changed, and she swooned: Then said the Knight

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might now unbind her arm, and stretch it;
 and said unto her: Now go to bed and study, and
 think henceforth to amend your life, or I shall
 draw the blood of your heart. As this was done
 he gave the Barber his reward, and he went
 again to his own house, and his Wife being
 under the hands of her Maids almost dead, was
 led to her bed: she made one of her Maidens go
 to her Mother in haste, and say, that I desire
 her to come and speak with me before I die: the
 Mother when she heard that, was glad of the
 correction of her Daughter, and came hastily
 to her. When the Daughter heard her Mother,
 she said: O my sweet Mother, I am almost
 dead, for I have bled so much, that I believe I
 shall not escape death. When answered the Mo-
 ther: said I not that old men are right cruel;
 will you now love the Priest: She said, the
 Devil may the Priest confound, I will never
 love other but my Husband. Then said the Ma-
 ster to the Emperor: Lord have you understood
 me: he answered right well, for amongst all I
 have heard, this was the best example. Thrice
 evil deeds he did to her Husband; and I doubt
 not, if he had done the fourth, she would have
 named him for ever. Then said the Master,
 therefore I counsel you, that you beware of your
 Wife, lest it happen worse to you, which ap-
 pears manifestly in this Example, if you
 live to death your only Son for her words,

If

you

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you shall be deceived in the end, and for that
 shall repent it. The Emperour said: truly
 after this day my Son shall not die. The Pa-
 said: My Lord, I thank you, that ye for
 take this day have spared your only Son.

The fifth Example of the Empress.

The Empress hearing the Child was
 dead, forthwith apparelled her self,
 caused the Wains to be in readines, as though
 she would have gone unto her own Country
 her Father, to complain of the great harm
 was done her, and yet could have no remedy.
 The Servants seeing that, shewed to the Em-
 perour that the Empress was going into
 Country; when he perceived that, he went
 her, saying, whither are you going? I hope
 you had loved me, so that in all the world
 would have sought no solace but with me.
 which she said: that is true, and therefore I
 from you, for I had rather hear of your death
 than see you die: you delight so much to
 these matters, that it shall happen to you, as
 did to Octavian the Emperour, the which was
 covetous, that the Noblemen of the Empire
 buried him quick, and filled his mouth full
 molten gold. The Emperour said: dear
 do not so, that the blame on you and the
 laid. When said the Empress: truly Sir,
 blame is yours, for have you not promised

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many times your Son shall die, yet he liveth; therefore I will no more believe. Then said the Emperoz; it becometh not a King every cause lightly to discuss without great advice, especially upon his Son, on whom it is no matter, but upon deliberation and good counsel to take judgment: therefore I pray you tell me somewhat by which I may govern my life, so it is the destruction of a King, without advice, and indiscreetly to give judgment. She answered, I will gladly tell you a notable Example, so that henceforth you will not be desirous to hear the Masters; and began in this manner following.

The fifth Example of the Empress.

O Cravianus the Emperoz reigned in Rome, right rich and covetous, and above all things he loved Gold. The Citizens of Rome at that time did much harm; and many great damages to other Nations, insomuch that many Kingdoms were moved against the Romans. In that time was Master Virgilius, the which excelled in Magick and other Sciences above other Masters: the Citizens prayed him by his Art he would devise, how they of their Enemies might have warning before-hand, whereby they might provide for themselves the better. And made by his cunning

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a Tower, and on the Tower did cause to be
as many Images, as in all the World was
Regions and Provinces, and in the midst of
Tower an Image, which held in his hand
Apple, or a great round Ball of Gold. And e-
ry Image of the Tower held in his hand a li-
tle Bell, and stood turning and looking toward
his own Province to him assigned: and as
ten as any Province would rebell against
Romans, so often turned he to the Images of
Land, and rung the Bell; that hearing, the
Citizens of Rome armed themselves, and so the
Province hastened with all their might the same
to subdue: So there was no Land so great
could break them upon the Romans, and there-
fore were they feared over all the World. And
that Master Virgil made for the comfort of
poor people a light that always burned; and
that light he made two Baths, the one of
hot, in which the poor people might bathe
wash themselves: and the other cold, in which
they might themselves refresh. Betwixt
Light and the Baths, he made an Image, stand-
ing, in whose fore-head was written, He that
smiteth me, shall anon have vengeance. The
Image stood there many years, and at last came
Clerk and beheld the Image and read the
writing, and thought in himself, what vengeance
might find, therefore I do believe better
any man smite thee, and thou fallest there.

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the earth, he shall find some treasure under
 his feet; and therefore in the Writing, that
 no Man should have it. And the Clerk lift up
 his hand, and gave the Image a great stroke, that
 it fell to the ground: and anon the Light was
 out, and the Baths were vanished away, and
 he found no Treasure. The poor Folks per-
 ceiving that were all sorrowful, and laid their
 curses and complaints upon him, that for
 his singular Covetousness had destroyed the I-
 mage, and robbed them of so great a Solace.
 Hereafter assembled three Kings, which by the
 Romans had suffered great wrongs, and went to
 take counsel how they might be avenged of the
 Romans; and some of them said: we labour in
 vain, for as long as there standeth the Tower
 with the Images, we cannot do any thing a-
 gainst them.

At the Counsel arose four Knights, and said:
 We have thought on a remedy how to destroy
 the Tower with the Images, and that to do,
 we will lay our lives to pledge, if you will be
 at the cost. Then answered the Kings: what
 cost shall we be at? They answered: Four
 Tun of Gold. Then said the Kings: take the
 Gold, and fulfil your promise. The Knights
 took the Gold, and went towards Rome: And
 when they came thither in the night, without
 one of the Gates, in the ditch full of Water,
 they drowned one of the Tuns with the Gold

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in it, and another Tun they drowned by the second gate, and the third Tun they drowned by the third gate, and the fourth Tun by the fourth Gate; and when they had thus done, early in the morning they entered into the City at an hour convenient: and as the Emperour went over the Market they did him reverence. The Emperour seeing them, demanded from whence they were, of what Science, and what service they could do. They answered: We are all of us Countries, and Souldiers so perfect, that there is never a thing so privily hid, but we shall find it out by our Dreams. We have heard that ye labour and have pleasure in such things, and therefore we come unto you to know if you have need of our service: the Emperour said, I will prove you; and if it be, that I find you true, you shall have of me great rewards and thanks. They said, we ask nothing but the half of the Gold which by us shall be found: The Emperour said, I am well content. And thus they had with the Emperour many words. At night when the Emperour was going to bed, they said unto him: My Lord, if it please you, this night shall the eldest of us let his cunning a-work and dream: The third day he shall shew you his Dream, and what it signifieth. The Emperour said: Go in Good Name. And they went forth with great gladness: And this night they passed with great joy

and mirth, upon trust they should come to a good purpose. When the third day was come, they went early to the Emperoz; the first said: My Lord, please you to go with us without one of the Gates of the City, and I will shew where there is a Tun full of Gold hid; the Emperoz said, I shall go with you and see if it be true that you say. And when they were come to the place they drew out the Tun, that they before there had put; the Emperoz when he saw that, was glad and gave them their part; then said the second Dreamer: My Lord, this night shall I dream; then the Emperoz said, God give you a good dream; the next night came, and he took out the other tun and gave it to the Emperoz, & took also his share. In the like manner the third and the fourth; upon which the Emperoz was out of all measure ioyous, and said: he had not seen such true and expert Souch-layers, or Dreamers as they were. Then said they all of them together, as it had been out of one mouth: My Lord, we have all one after another dreamed, the which you have seen, they be all proved: but now if it please you that we dream altogether this night, we trust that to us shall be shewed, that we shall find a great quantity of Gold and Riches. The Emperoz said: God give you a good dream, which to me and you may be profitable. On the next morrow they came again unto the Emperoz, and said unto

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him with countenance of full joy: my Lord we bring good and profitable tydings; for the night in our sleepe, so great a Treasure is us shewed, the which if you will suffer it to be sought, you shall be so enriched, that in this world none shall be like unto you. The Emperour said: Where shall we find this Treasure? they said: under the foundation of the Tower that the Images stand upon, The Emperour answered: God defend I should for love of Gold destroy the Tower with the Images, wherewith we from our Enemies be defended and warned. They said to him again; my Lord have you found us in our sayings otherwise than true? the Emperour said, Nay, O Lord (said they) we with our own hands shall give out the Gold, without hurting the Tower, or the Images. And it is expedient (that secretly in the night) by us it be done, for dread of revolt and concourse of the people, least that it should run in the clamour of them, and they take that good Gold away from you and us. The Emperour said: go in the name of God, and do your best as you will, or can, and I shall to morrow early come to you. Then went they with gladness, and in the night were let into the Tower, and then with great haste and diligence they undermined it, and on the next day, very early in the morning, mounted upon their Horses, and rode again towards their

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shon Country with joy and glory, and ere they
 came without the sight of Rome, the Tower
 fell down on the morning ensuing. When it
 was fallen, and the Senators it perceived, they
 sorrowed greatly, and there was a great be-
 wailing throughout all the City, and they went
 unto the Emperoz and said: Lord, how may
 it be that this Tower is thus fallen, by the
 which we have always had warning afore of
 our enemies: he answered and said, to me came
 four false deceivers, and feigned themselves to
 be South-sayers, and that they could find trea-
 sure in the ground: and said, that under the
 foundation of the Tower was hidden an innu-
 merable sum of gold, the which they should un-
 dermine without hurting the Tower and I-
 mages: I gave faith to them, and they have de-
 ceived me. They answered: ye have coveted
 so much gold, that for your unsatiate covetous-
 ness we shall all be destroyed: but first your
 covetousness shall fall upon your self. Then
 they took him and led him to the Capitol, and
 laid him on his back, and poured his mouth full
 of molten gold; saying to him, you have de-
 sired Gold, and therefore ye shall drink Gold:
 and after that they buried him quick. Not
 long after that came the Enemy against the
 Romans, and overcame and destroyed them
 all.

Then said the Empress unto the Emperoz,
 have

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have ye, My Lord, this Example well understood and he said right well, then said he, the Tower with Images is your body with five wits: as long as you live there is none so hardy to trouble, or to make war upon you, nor upon your people; that hath your Son right well understood, and doth with the seven Masters and their false Narrations or Fables seek how they might destroy you; for you are overmuch covetous to incline to them, insomuch that they shall undermine you and cast you under foot, and bring you to nought; the Images are your five wits that be all lost. And for as much as you be foolish they shall destroy you, and your son shall obtain your Empire.

The Emperour said, ye have recited a good Example; wherefore it shall not happen to me as to the Tower, but my Son first this day shall taste the bitterness of death. To whom the Empress said: if ye do so, ye shall speed well and live long. Upon the same day he commanded his Son to be led to hanging; and as he was led towards the Gallows, came riding against him upon a horse, the fifth Master towards the Palace, who came before the Emperour, and saluted him with all reverence; but he despised his salutation, and put him in fear of his life. The Master said unto the Emperour: my Lord, I have not deserved for to die; and to despise my salutation, it is not for your Honour

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nour : for your Son hath not with us been of such condition, as ye repute him, as ye in short time shall find : and that he speaketh not, is of his great wisdom : and know ye, that he shall well speak as his time cometh, though he now speaketh not, as you in short time shall hear. But that he would have ashamed your wife, believe not, for so wise a man as he is would never attempt so shameful a deed : and if you put him to death for your wives words, ye shall not escape without shame and vengeance, like as Ippocras escaped not without vengeance for the death of Gallienus his Cousin. The Emperour said, that would I fain hear and understand. Then said the Master : what would it avail me to tell you this Narration for your profit, if in the mean season your Son should die : wherefore if you will call again your Son, it shall be discovered at your pleasure, after do as you think best. The Emperour bad call again his Son, and set him in prison, and then began the Master to tell on the manner as followeth.

The Example of the fifth Master.

Sometimes there was a famous Physician named Ippocras right cunning, who excelled all others in Learning and Science : He had with him his Nephew Gallienus, the which he loved so much : This Gallienus

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nus was of excellent wit, and applied all his mind and wit to learn of his Uncle the science of Physick. When Ippocras perceived that, in so much as he could, he hid from him his cunning, fearing he should excel him in that knowledge, for the great wit he was off.



As Gallienus saw this, he studied & exercised, in so much that in short time he had perfect cunning in Physick, for the which Ippocras envied him much. It happened upon a time thereafter, that the King of Hungary sent his Messenger unto Ippocras, that he should come unto him for to cure his Son. Ippocras excused himself, and sent his Cousen Gallienus with Letters of excuse for his not coming. When Gallienus was come before the King, he was

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his
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in
un-
wa
 worshipfully received, and they marvelled Ippo-
 cras would not come. He excused him, saying
 that he had many great things to do, and he
 might not come, but hath sent me in his stead;
 and with the help of God I shall make whole
 the Child: that pleased very well the King.
 Gallienus went to the Child, and when he had
 seen the Wierue and touched his Pulses, he said
 to the Quēn: O excellent Princess, I pray
 you hear and suffer my words, and tell me who
 is the Father of the Child; she said, who should
 be the Father, but my Lord the King; Gallienus
 said, I am sure he is not the Father: she an-
 swered, if you will say that for a truth, I shall
 cause your head to be smote off; he answered, I
 say once again, that this King is not the Father,
 and I am not come hither to lose my head, for
 I have not deserved any such reward, and was
 going his way. The Quēn spake, O good Ma-
 ster Gallienus, if ye will keep it secret, and not
 discover me, I shall open unto you my heart.
 The Master said: God defend that from me,
 that I to any person shall shew it: and there-
 fore, O noble Quēn, shew it boldly to me, for
 it shall never pass my mouth, and I shall make
 your son whole. She said, if you do that, ye shall
 have a good reward; here therefore what I
 shall say: By fortune came hither unto my
 Lord the King of Burgundy, and he was so long
con-

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conuersant with me, that this Child by him
bear. Then said the Master, fear not, I know it
was so before. And anon he gave the Child me-
dicines, and compounded things, whereof to eat
and drink, and the Child was eased of his infir-
mity. And when the King heard that the child
was recovered of his sickness, he gave unto the
Master a good reward: but of the Queen he se-
cretly received a great gift, and special thanks,
and so went his way. And when he was come
home, Ippocras his Master, demanded of him:
saying, have ye beheld the Child? And he said,
yea; then asked he him what he gave him: ei-
ther compounds or uncompounded things: then
said Ippocras, that Mother of the Child is not
true to her Husband; that is truth said Galie-
nus. Then Ippocras was moved with envy, and
thought in himself, if there be not found a Re-
medy, my Sciences shall be no more set by, but
he shall be praised above me. And from that day
forward he devised how he might slay him. Up-
on a day Ippocras called him, and said: come go
with me to seek and gather herbs in the Gar-
den; to whom he said: Master, I am ready.
And when they were come into the Garden,
Ippocras said: I see that this Herb is right ver-
tuous: stoop down, and gather me of it. And
Gallienus did so. And as they went about the
Garden, said Ippocras. Now I will perceive
the

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the odor of this Herb, that is more precious than gold; and therefore stoop down to the ground and draw it out with the root, for it is much worth: Gallienus bowed down himself to pull out the Herb, and Ippocras drew out his knife and killed him: After that Ippocras fell sick to the death, that the strength of his body failed him, and did as much as he could to help himself, but that could not be; and as the Scholars and Disciples heard of it, they went hastily unto him, and did all they might or could for profit of his health, but it availed them nothing.

When Ippocras this perceived, he said unto his Scholars: Fetch me a great Tun, and fill it full to the brim with water; and when they had so done, he said unto them: Make now therein an hundred holes; and when that was also done, there went none of the water out. Then said Ippocras: Behold, my most dear Disciples how the vengeance of God is fallen upon me, as you may openly see: for in this Tun are an hundred holes, and goeth not thereout any drop: Might so there cometh no virtue out of the Herbs to help me, and therefore what ye do unto me, helpeth not; for I must die: But my dear Children, if my Nephew Gallienus were alive he could heal me, whom I have slain, and that grieveth me sore, and therefore the vengeance of God commeth upon

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upon me : and this said, he turned to the wall and gave up the ghost. Then said the Master unto the Emperoz: My Lord, understand ye well what I have said: he answered, yea, right well: what hurt had it been to him if Gallienus had lived.

The Master answered: it had been better for Ippocras at that time, had not he died, and therefore by the right wise judgment of God, his Medicines abailed him not, and therefore I shewed to you that it shall happen worse to you, if that you put to death your Son for the words of your Wife, who in time of necessity shall ease and succour you. And consider you not, that ye have after the first wife, wedded this wife that ye now have: and so ye may the third and fourth, and never shall ye have such a Son, that shall save you from peril. The Emperoz said, truly he shall not die.

Then said the Master, then do you that becomes the wisdom of your years, and the Royalty of your person, and I commend you to God, and I thank ye that you have this day for me spared your Son. The Emperoz said, I mark this well, that women are very crafty, therefore I will not for you, but for my self spare him.

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The sixth Complaint of the Emperess.

When the Emperess had knowledge thereof, she shewed her self so impatient, that all that saw her, or heard her, wondered, and said to the Emperoz: your Wife pineth as though she would shortly die. The Emperoz hearing thereof, went to her, and said, wherefore (good Lady) be ye so impatient? She answered, saying, O Lord, how should I hold it in, when I am the only Daughter of a King, and your Wife, and in your company I have had great despise, and you have promised to punish him, but perform it not: the Emperoz said, I wot not what to do, ye labour to have my Son put to death, and the Masters labour to save his life; and amongst these I know he is my Son: But where the truth is that I know not. Then said she, this is the cause whereof I complain, that ye believe the Masters more than me; and therefore it shall happen to you, as it did to a King and his Steward.

Then said the Emperoz, tell me that Example, peradventure it may move me sooner to put my Son to death; she said gladly, but I pray give attention to what I say: and began as ensueeth.

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The sixth Example of the Empress.

There was a King most proud and desirous
 ed in his visage, so that all women hated
 him. The King thought to destroy all Rome
 and carry away the Bodies of Peter and Paul
 who while he was in the mind, called
 Steward that was secretly with him of his
 Priory Council, and said unto him, go seek
 fair woman that this night may sleep with me.
 The Steward answered: My Lord, ye have
 your infirmity, and no woman will do so
 without a great sum of money. The King
 think you for my money I will want no
 have I not Gold and Silver enough? then
 it were a thousand Florents I would it go

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The Steward hearing that, was smitten with covetousness, and went to his wife, which was fair, chaste, and of good kindred, and said to her, O my good wife, my Lord desireth to sleep with a vertuous woman, and will not forbear it though she ask a thousand Florents: and hath commanded me so to provide him one: Therefore I counsel you, that you get that money. The wife said, were it so, that the King were not so proud, and foul of visage, yet would I not consent for the sin against God. The Steward said, I command you, and promise you, that without ye consent herein, ye shall never have a good day with me: she hearing that, trembled, insomuch that for fear she consented unto him.

The Steward then went to the King, and said, Sir, I have found a fair woman, and she is come of a very good House, which will not have less than a thousand Florents: in the Evening she shall come, and early in the morning must go away, that she be not seen. The King answered, I am consented. When night was come, the Steward led his wife to the Kings Bed, made fast the door, and went his way. Early in the morning the Steward arose and went unto the King, and said, my Lord, it will be day within a while: it is good you perform your promise, and let the woman go. The King said: This woman pleaseeth me

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so well, that so soon she should not depart. When he heard that he departed all sozry, and tarried a while, and came to the King again, and said: My Lord, the morning is come, therefore let the woman go, and as I promised her, lest she be ashamed. The King said, yet shall she not go; therefore go out, and shut the doo. The Steward right sorrowful departed, and went up and down with an heaby heart, till the clear day appeared: then he entred again into the Chamber, and said, my Lord it is clear day, suffer the woman to depart, that she be not ashamed. The King answered, I say she shall not yet depart, for her company is to me well pleasing. The Steward hearing that, could not longer forbear to hold his own counsell, but said, O my good Lord, I beseech you suffer her to depart, for it is mine own wife. The King hearing that, said to him, open the window, and when it was open the bright day appeared, and he beheld the woman fait, and perceived it was the wife of the Steward, and said, O thou stain of Dishonour, and shame of the Creation, why hast thou for so little money shamed thy good wife, and delivered her to me unwitting: therefore haste thee, and get thee out of my Realm, and never come in my sight; for if ever I see thee, thou shalt die the most shameful death that can be imagined. When the Steward heard that

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that he fled, and durst not abide, and never moze came into the Realm. And the King kept that Wife all his life time in great honour, and gave her plenty of all things that to her appertained.

After that the King caused to be assembled a mighty Army of puissant Men of War, and went to the City of Rome with great might, and besieged it on all sides, until the Romans would have delivered to him (for to have withdrawn himself from thence) the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, St. Peter and Paul.

Then there was in the City Seven Wise Masters, as ye have now, by the counsel of whom all the City was governed. And the Citizens came unto them, and said, what shall we do? It behoves us, that we give unto our enemies the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, or the City. Then answered the first Master, I shall with my wisdom this day save the City, and the Bodies of the Apostles. And so every one of them promised for one day to do the like, in like manner as your Masters have promised your Son. With that the King began to assault the City in all parts. Then began the first Master to allendge so wisely to have Peace, that the King that day left his assault, and withdrew a little from the City: and so did all the Masters one after another, till the last. Unto whom came the Burgeses of

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the City, and said, O Master, ye shall understand, that the King hath sworn, that to morrow with all his strength he will win the City, and we must all be in jeopardy to lose our lives: Therefore acquitting your promise, defend us from danger, like as your fellows before you have done. Then answered the Master: Fear not, for to morrow, I shall by my running shew such an operation, that the King and all his might shall leave the Siege. The next day the King gave a great assault to the City; then went the Master and cloathed himself in a marvelous strange Vesture, having therein the Feathers of Peacocks, and other Fowls of divers colours, and took two bright Swords in each hand one, and went therewith and stood upon the highest Tower of the City, and began to move and turn, and shew himself towards the Host, so that they might all behold him; and he held in his mouth the two bright Swords that marvelously shined. They without the Kings Host beholding that, said unto him, O King, behold in the top of yonder Tower a wonderful thing; yea (quoth he) I see it right well; it is marvelous: but what it is I know not. They said, it is the God of Christian Folk, that is come out of Heaven to slay us with two Swords if we longer abide. The King hearing that, trembled for fear, and said, what shall we do? There is but one

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one day, and that is, that we depart from hence, lest their God revenge himself upon us. Then began the King with his Host to flye: Notwithstanding there was no need, for they of the Master was deceived. When the Romans saw that, they hastily pursued them, well armed, and slew the King with many of the people, and in that manner (by great subtilty of the Masters) was the mighty King with his Army subdued. Then said the Empress unto the Emperour, Lord have you understood what I have said; he said, yea, with good attention. She said, now ye have heard what I said unto you at the beginning of this Narration of the Steward, that the King trusted so much, which for covetousness shamed his own Wife, and so that was banished out of the Land: in like manner, your Son, for the desire he hath to the Empire, intendeth to destroy you: but whilst he is in your power, do with him as the King did with his Steward. If you will not put him to death, then put him out of your Empire, that you may live in safeguard of your life. And have you also heard how the King lay before Rome, and how he was by the Wise Masters deceived, and he with his followers were slain: In like manner the Seven Wise Masters intended to deal with you, and with crafty wiles receive you, and in the end traitterously murder you, that so your Son might

Reign in our Empire. Whereupon answered the Emperoz, that shall not be, for to morrow my Son shall die. Then he commanded his Seruants forthwith to lead his Son to Execution. When the people heard these things they gathered in great Troops much lamenting the death of the Emperors Son. And as soon as the sixth Master had heard thereof, he hasted to the Emperors Court, and saluted him with reverence, but he disdainfully threatened him that he should be put to death with his Son for he was with them made dumb and a Ribaule, which was shewed towards his Wife. The Master replied, I have not deserved to die with your Son, but to have large gifts; for he is not dumb, as you shall hear within three days, if he may live so long; but if you put him to death for the words of your Wife, then I shall marvel at your wisdom, and without doubt it shall happen to you, as sometimes it happened to a Knight, that so much allowed the saying of his wife, that he was bound to an horse-tail, and drawn through the City to the Gallows. The Emperoz said, for the love of God shew me that Example, that I may beware of the evil. That I will not do, said the Master, without you call again your Son. Then he commanded to call back his Son; and the Master began as followeth,

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The Example of the sixth Master.

Sometimes there was an Emperour of Rome which had three Knights, whom he loved above all others: in the same City there was an ancient Knight that had wedded a fair young wife which above all things he loved; as you see the Emperess: the Lady could sing with such sweetness, that many desired her company. It chanced on a season as she sat in the House her passage turned to the Street, that she might see them that walked by, and began sweetly to sing, that all folks delighted to hear her. By chance there came that ways a Knight of the Emperours Court, that heard her voice, and beholding her with a willing mind, and attentive ear, he was exceedingly taken in love: and entering the house, fell into talk with her greatly, but chiefly of love, and amongst other talk he demanded of her, what he should give her to keep by her side one night: She answered one hundred Florents. Then said the night, tell me when I shall come, and I shall give it you. Sooth she, when I have convenient time, I shall send for you. The next day she sung in the same place, and the second Knight of the Emperours Court came by that way, who likewise was smitten in her love, and he also promised her an hundred Florents: to whom she made the like promise. The third day came to her another knight, and unto him she likewise consented, and

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and he promised her an hundred Florents, if she should give him knowledge of the time; which she also promised. These three Knights having so secretly spoken with the Lady, that not one of them had knowledg of one anothers coming unto her. Now the Lady was deceitful, and came to her Husband, and said: Sir, I have a secret matter to shew you, wherein if you follow my counsel, our poverty you may largely relieve. The Knight replied, tell it me, and I will keep it as secret as my life, and fulfill to you the uttermost of my power. She answered, that three Knights of the Emperors Court had been with me, one after another, in such wise that none of them knoweth of anothers coming, and each Knight offered me an hundred Florents. Might we an hundred Florents get, and no man know it, should not our poverty be much relieved? Then said the Knight, yea: then before whatsoever you will counsel me, I shall willingly perform; then said she, I give you my counsel, that when the Knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind a Gate with your sword drawn, and as they come, (being they come one after another) you shall slay them, and so we shall have the three hundred Florents they bring, without any mans knowledge. The Knight answered, O my best beloved wife, I fear this evil cannot be hid, and I shall therefore suffer death if it were known.

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if she answered, I shall this work begin, and
 therefore make a good end, fear not. When the
 Knight saw she was so hardy, it caused him to
 be more bold: then she sent for the first Knight,
 and he came without tarrying to the Gate, and
 asked; and she asked if he had brought the
 hundred Florents: he answered, I have brought
 them. When she let him in, and he had no sooner
 entered but her Husband murdered him. Im-
 mediately came the second Knight, and in like
 manner was slain. And not long after came the
 third Knight, whom also he slew. Having fi-
 nished the butchery, they conveyed the murder-
 ed bodies into a secret Chamber. When they
 thus done, the Knight said unto the Lady,
 dear Wife, if these dead bodies should be
 found with us, we shall die the most shameful
 death that can be imagined, for it is not possi-
 ble but these three Knights will be missed in
 the Emperors Court, and great search will be
 made for them throughout the City. She an-
 swered and said, Sir Knight, I have now this
 work begun, and will make a good end, fear
 not, as I have said. This Lady had a Brother
 who had the Government of the Wealth of
 the City, that on nights watched in the Streets
 with his fellows: she stood at the Gate, and
 called unto her Brother, and said: O my best
 loved Brother, I have a secret matter, which

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I would not make known, therefore come
 with me, and I will relate it unto you.
 When he was entred the house, the Lady
 led him friendly, and gave him wine, and
 my beloved Brother, this is the cause I
 called you, for I have much need of your
 counsel. The Brother answered, speak but
 and whatsoever I may do, to my power, shall
 at your desire, without any letting. Then
 she, yesterday came a Knight in friendship
 afterwards he fell into such variance with
 Husband, that he slew him: and he lieth
 dead in my Chamber: now my dear Brother
 we have no man that we may trust, but
 you: and if this dead Body be found in
 House, we shall be put to death. For
 mentioned but one. Her Brother said, I
 him me in a Sack, and I will bear him to
 Sea. She hearing that, was glad thereof,
 delivered him the Body of the first Knight
 he took it, and went a good space, and cast
 therein: and as soon as this was done,
 came to his Sister, and said to her: Give
 of the best wine, for you are of him again.
 She gave him thanks, and went to her Cham-
 ber, as though she had gone for wine, and
 began to cry aloud: The Knight that was cast
 the Sea is come again. As her Brother heard
 that, he marvelled sore, and said: Give

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m, I shall see if he will rise again, and took
 the second Knight (supposing it had been the
 first of the first) and went to the Sea, and
 a stone drowned him. That done, he went
 to his Sister, and said, now fill me a
 cup of good wine, for I have drowned him
 again, that he shall never come again. Then
 she thanks be to God; and went again to
 her Chamber and feigned to fetch wine, and
 went alone, Alas he is risen again, and is come
 out of the sea! And as her Brother heard that,
 a great marvel, he said, what Devil is this
 that I have cast into the water, and yet he is
 risen again, deliver him me the third time, and
 I shall see if he will come again. Then she gave
 him the third Knight; which he believed had
 been the first, and went without the City to a
 great Forrest, and made a great fire to cast him
 in, and when he was almost burnt, she
 went a little distance to do his need.
 Then came a Knight that was to ride to the
 Court, where in the morning should be a Tur-
 ning and Jousting: it was cold weather, and dark
 and not far from the City, and when he saw the
 fire he drew thereto, and alighted and warmed
 himself.
 The Watchman came and said, what are
 you? the Knight said, I am a Knight. Then
 the Watchman, thou art no Knight, but
 a Devil, for I first cast thee into the water,
 then

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then with a great stone I drowned thee, and
 third time I put thee in this fire, supposing
 thou hadst been burnt; and yet thou standest
 here: And then he took the Knight with his
 Horse, and cast them both into the fire. And
 that he went unto his Sister, and told her what
 had happened; and said, now bring me the
 wine; for after I had burnt him, I found him
 again by the fire, with a Horse, and have cast
 them both into the fire: and by this he
 perceived he had burnt a Knight of the Empe-
 ror: who anon brought him the wine
 dantly; and after he had well drunk, he
 parted thence. Not long after there fell a
 contention betwixt the Knight and his
 so that he smote her; and she had indignation
 thereof, being angry, and said, that many
 her: O wretch, wilt thou kill me, as thou
 the three Knights: certain men hearing of
 laid hands on them, and brought them to the
 Emperour; and the woman confessed that her
 Husband had slain the three Knights of the
 Emperours, and how he took from them
 hundred Florents. And it being so found
 were drawn at a Horse-tail and hanged. And
 said the Master to the Emperour, have you
 understood what I have said: he answered,
 well: I say for certain that this Wife was
 worst woman that might be: for first she
 bed him to murder, and afterwards discom-
 mended him.

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him. The Master said : without doubt it shall happen to you worse, if you put your Son to death by advice of your Wife. The Emperoz said, my Son shall not die this day. The Master hearing that, gave thanks to the Emperoz, and took leave, and went his way.

The seventh Complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress heard the Emperoz's Son was yet living, as a mad woman, she ran to the Emperoz weeping, and saying, Oh unhappy woman ! what shall do ? I must needs slay my self that am so ashamed, and no punishment thereupon done. The Emperoz answered : God defend that you should have mind on such a wicked deed ; suffer a while, and you shall have a good end. She answered, Sir, the end shall be evil ; for of that shall follow a great confusion. The Emperoz said, leave such talk. She said, Lord, it shall come to you and to your Son, as to a King and his Steward. I pray tell me that Example. She said, I will gladly, but I fear you will hear me no more. For next day the seventh Master shall speak, and save your Son from death as the other six have done, and when your Son shall speak ; of whose words you shall have such joy and delectation, that the love betwixt us shall be wholly forgotten. The Emperoz said, that is impossible, for I shall never forget your love.

Then

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He then said he, my best beloved Lord, I please you, I will tell you one Example which you shall beware of many perils, especially of your accursed Son, who intendeth to destroy me by his Masters. The Emperour then tell on. And the Emperess began to tell hereafter followeth.



The Seventh Example of the Emperess.

There was a King which loved his wife above all things, in so much that he closed her within a strong Castle, and bare the sword of himself: the Lady was therefore he and comfortless. Now in far Countries there was a valiant knight, which lying on his bed dreamed he saw one of the fairest Queens

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eyer eye beheld, whose love abode all others he
 desired to obtain, and if he might see her walk,
 he should certainly have some knowledge of her,
 by whom to him great friendship and honour
 should come. To the Queen the same night,
 by vision of the same Knight, the like was also
 shewed, and as yet they had no knowledge of
 each other, neither of Name or Fame. When
 the Knight had thus dreamed, and seen (as he
 thought) a most vertuous and comely Lady, he
 determined that his foot should take no rest, till
 he had found out the Lady, that in his dream
 seemed so glorious: and having took horse,
 and all that was necessary for his journey, he
 travelled throughout divers Regions, Coun-
 ties, and Kingdoms, till at last he came into
 the Land, where this Queen was by her sea-
 sons Husband kept in a strong Castle. When
 this Knight was come unto the City, and had
 for a season therein sojourned, it fell out, that
 as the Knight walked by the Castle, (and knew
 not as then, that the Queen was therein kept)
 he was at that time sitting in a Window to see
 the people pass by, and amongst others he
 spied the Knight, and knew him to be the man
 of whom she had dreamed before: the Knight
 by chance lifted up his eyes, and perceived the
 Lady in the Window, and his mind gave him
 that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and
 he began a Song in Love. As he heard that,

H

he

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It was taken with her love. That Knight
 from thenceforth daily walked about the Castle
 beholding it all over, to espy if any way he
 might get in, to declare his mind unto her.
 The Lady perceiuing that, presently indited
 a Letter, and secretly conueyed it unto him
 from the Casement of her Chamber Window
 which when he had perused, and understanding
 the will of the Lady, he began to haunt Jousts
 and Tournaments, and did perform so many
 marvelous Acts, that the fame of him came
 to the ears of the King, and as soon as the King
 heard thereof, he sent after him, and called
 unto him: Sir Knight, I have heard that you
 have got much honour at our Jousts and Tou-
 rnaments: wherefore if it please you to abide
 here and dwell with us, we shall giue you large
 rewards. The Knight answered: O my
 Prince, I am your servant; would I could
 do any service that would please your Majesty
 without taking any reward, save
 nothing before all other I desire. The King
 said unto me boldly what that is. The Knight
 answered: My Lord, seeing that it hath pleased
 your most Excellent Majesty to take me for
 your servant, and one of your grave Coun-
 sellors, it seemeth to me most expedient for both our
 rights that I have a place nigh the Wall
 of the Castle, that I at all times might be ready
 to attend you, when you need. The King

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answered, I consent; make it as you think best. Then the Knight caused many Workmen to be brought, and having so done, he chose out certain for his purpose, and caused them to build him a fair Lodging near the walls of the Tower: this being finished, he made a Covenant with one of the Workmen, (whom he thought fittest) to make a secret way to the Queens Lodgings: and when this was finished he killed the Workman, because he should not make it known. Having thus done, he went unto the Queen, and did her reverence as became him, and they discoursed of many matters. Having thus passed the day, the night drawing on, he desired he might sleep by her that night, but she often denyed him; yet nevertheless consented unto his request. Now they having spent the night in pleasure, and morning being come, the Knight returned to his Lodgings: and the Queen began to think with her self: what shall I do; if I should make my Husband acquainted herewith, two evils would come thereof; the one is my shame, and peradventure he would utterly forsake me, and cause me to be driven out of the Land forever: the other is, that he would slay the Knight, for deatch it is not possible for him to spare; therefore I think it more expedient to keep it secret therein then to reveal it. After that, the Knight as often as it pleased him, went in

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unto the Queen, and did his will with her; she gave him a Ring, which the King had given her at her Wedding. This Knight was so famous in Jousting, that in every Battle and Tournament he had the Victorie: for because he was in great favour with the King, that he made him Steward and Governour over all his Land.

It happened on a day, that the King disposed to ride a hunting, and commanded his Steward to be ready on the morrow to go with him, whereupon he offered himself willingly. The morrow they entered the Forrest, all day killing the wild Beasts, and were so weary, that the King sat down by a Fountain to rest, the Knight by his side: the Knight was sooner set, but he fell asleep by the King, being the King on his finger, which the Queen had given him; which the King perceiveth, knew it well. When the Knight awaked, perceiving the King had seen the Ring, he feigned himself to be sore sick, and said, my honorable Lord, I feel my self so sick, that if I do not haste me unto my Lodging, and seek out some present remedy, either by Physick, or some other course, I am but a dead man, therefore pray you give me leave to go home. To this the King made this answer: Go dear friend, in the name of God, and see there be nothing wanting to procure thy health, that my Countess

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Kingdom can afford. The King had no sooner ended his Speech, but immediately the Knight took leave, and getting upon his Horse, he hastened to his House, and as soon as he was come home, he alighted, and hastened to the Queens Lodgings, and gave her the Ring again, and told her withal how the King had espied it upon his finger, when they were both set down to rest: withal he told her, that he feigned himself to be very sick, for which cause the King gave him leave to return to his Lodgings: he also prayed her, that if the King at any time should call for the Ring, she should shew it unto him. This done he took his leave of her, and went again unto his Lodging. Not long after, the King came to the Queen, and she received him right lovingly; and after a little time had passed, the King said unto her, my renowned Lady, shew me the Ring that I gave you, for I have a great desire to see it. She answered: O my best-beloved Lord, why at this time do you desire to see it? Then said he, if you shew it not unto me incontinently, it shall repent you. Then she arose and went to her Cabinet, and took the Ring out of it: and having thus done, she brought it to her Husband: and when he had seen it, he was half ashamed, and said; my best-beloved Queen: O how like is that Knights Ring unto this, which I saw upon his finger? I believe it had been mine, and that was

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the cause I did ask so hastily for it. And of the
suspicion I yield my self guilty, my dear Lady
in this behalf : the strength of the Tower re-
ceived me, for I thought none could get there
in but I my self alone, in regard none had the
keeping of the keys but my self. She said unto
him, my dear Lord, wonder not, for one man
may be like another, and Workmen seldom
make one piece of work, but others make the
same : But God forgive you in that you have
suspected me ; for you know the strength of the
Tower, and the keys you have always in
your presence, and trust no man thereunto.
After that the Knight ordained a great Di-
ner, and said unto the King : my Sovereign
my Lady and Love is come from out of
Country to seek me, for whose sake I have
ordained a Dinner, and would intreat your
Highness to do me the honour, as to dine
with me this day, and take such meat as shall
be provided. The King answered, most willingly
will I do you that worship, and more.
The Knight was glad thereof, and by his
way went unto the Queen, and said unto
her My beloved Lady, you must do thus : come
to my house the privy way, and cloath your
self richly and deck your self with Jewels, and
other Ornaments, according to the Custom
of my Country : then shall you sit at Table
with my King, as my Sovereign Lady, and

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god cheer : She replied, Sir Knight, I am ready to do according to your desire. When the time appointed was near, and the King coming from the Castle towards the Knights House, in the mean time by the secret way the Queen entered the Knights Lodgings ; (before the King could come) and apparelled her self after the manner of the Knights Country. When the King entered the House, she with Courteous salutations received him ; and when the King had beheld her, he demanded of the Knight what woman she should be that seemed so fair : Then answered the Knight : my renowned Lord, it is my Sovereign Lady, that for the love she beareth me, is come out of my Country after me, to know why I should absent my self so long from her love and service. The speeches being ended, the Knight caused the King to sit down at the Table, and made the Queen sit by him : The King thought it was his Queen, and said within himself ; O how like is this woman unto my Wife : So the strength of the Tower still deceived him, that he gave more credit unto the Knights words, than to his own eyes. The Queen began to talk to the King, and for to stir him to eat and drink, and make good cheer : and as the King heard the voice, he said unto himself : O Mellow Lord, how like is this woman to my Queen in her behaviour, speech, visage, and in all other

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other conditions! and still the strength of the Tower deceived him. In the end of the Feast the Knight prayed his beloved Lady to sing before the King; and she began to sing a Song of Love. When the King heard her, he knew her voice, and thought unto himself, is not this my Wife? and yet how can this be, I having the keys of the Tower my self in keeping? In all Dinner time the King sat debating thus within himself. Dinner ended he willed the Knight forthwith to take up the Table, he having urgent occasions that moved him thereto, for he was sore troubled in mind. Whereupon the Knight said: My Lord, what is the reason you are so melancholly? what is that discontenteth you? be not troubled; if it please you, we shall make you some pleasant sport. And the Gentlewoman said: my beloved Lord, if it please you with us to abide, we shall make you all the delight that this place can afford: if your Queen her self were here, she could give you more content. Whereupon the King began to be angry, and said: Take away the Table, for I may no longer abide here, until that I have resolved my mind. Whereupon the Knight straightway obeyed the King, and took up the Table, giving thanks to all, but especially to the King his Sovereign Lord and Master.

Now the King departed, and went with all

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haste unto the Castle, to see whether that his Queen were therein or not: but in the mean time she went in at the pryvy doo, and stripped off her uppermost Vesture, and put her self into the same habit the King left her attired with. When the King entered therein, he found the Queen in the same Cloathing he had left her in before: and seeing all fell out contrary to his expectation, he kindly embraced her, and lovingly kissed her, and said unto her: This day have I eaten with my Knight, and with his loving Lady, who came out of her Country unto my Court to find him out; who being met and overjoyed in the sight of her, did presently ordain a great Feast, and humbly entreated me to do him so much Grace, as to accompany him at his Feast. Whereupon I answered him: that for the love I did bear him, I would do him that honour, and much more, if requested: whom I having beheld she seemed to me so fair, that since I was born mine eyes have not seen one so like as she is to you, insomuch that all Dinner time I was troubled with many matters, and could hardly endure unto the end of the Feast, but that I must come to see whether you were here or there.

Then the Queen answered him: O mighty King, wherefore do you mistrust me, having often found the contrary: Do you not know that

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that this Tower is so fast, strong, and invincible, that no man can enter in or out, without your knowledge: for you alwayes keep the keys, and will not trust any therewith: how then is it possible I should be there: you may find one man like another: you remember of late how you did mistake the Knights Kings: and have you more arguments of suspicion against me: was it not sufficient to debar me of liberty these many years, but you must now be jealous besides: I tell you, O noble King, if you do not forsake your jealousie, and release me out of imprisonment before three dayes be expired, I will end my dayes herein: for I had rather live a Servant at liberty, than a Queen in prison. The King answered: all that you have objected is true, of which I acknowledge my self guilty: wherefore have patience for a few dayes, and as sure as I reign King of this Country, I will set you at liberty: and so he lovingly embraced her with a kiss, and returned to his own Lodgings. Now he had not rested above two dayes, but the Knight came and said unto the King: O my honourable Lord, I have long served your Highness: now it is time I return into my own Country: and for all the service that I have done unto you, I desire but this one thing before my departure, which is: To give me before the Priest, with your own hand, in

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the Church, my beloved Lady, whom I intend to wed, (who followed me out of far Countries for love, and whom I shall bring thither again) as my lawful and true Wife, which will be to my great honour when I come into my Country. The King answered: that petition, and more than that (if you will desire it) will I gladly fulfil. Then the King prefixed the day of Marriage; when the good King came to Church honourably attended, the Priest was ready (adorned with his Vestments) to solemnize the Patrimony. The Knight apparelled the Queen in his own house after the manner of his own Country, and ordained two Knights to lead her to the Church, who believed it had been his Paramour. When they were come to the Church, the Priest said: who shall give this Woman to this Knight: the King said, I shall give her unto her own Knight: and took her by the hand, and said, O good woman, you are so like my Queen, that my love is to you the greater, and also because you shall be wedded to this Knight whom I affect above all men, and he shall be of my House, and so put the Queens hand into the Knights; and the Priest after the Order of the Church, bound them, and wedded them together in true and faithful wedlock. When all these Rites were finished, the Knight said unto the King: O most noble Lord, the Ship that I intend to go in towards my

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my Country, is now furnished for my journey, and ready to sail away; wherefore I humbly beseech your Noble Grace to accompany my beloved Wife therunto, and that you would admonish her to love me, and have me in favour above all others living, and so much the rather for your good counsel. The King with his followers (besides others) did accompany them unto the Ship, for whose departure many were exceeding sorrowful and heavy. Then the King began to say unto the Queen: My dear friend, hearken well unto my counsel, and see that ye follow it, for it shall be to your profit: my most honoured and beloved Knight hath now wedded and done to you all the honour that in him is; wherefore, look that you love, honour, and obey him above all other men, as God hath commanded, and that you be unto him true in all your dealings. As soon as this Speech was ended, he delivered her unto the Knight, saying: my blessing with you both, and our Lord keep and conduct you safely unto your own Country. Then the Knight and the Queen bowed their heads to the King, and gave him thanks for all the kindnesse that he had done them; and having so done, they committed him to the Almighty, and entered into the Ship; the Mariners hoisted sail before the wind, and within a short space the King lost sight of the Ship, and thence going hastily

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hastily into the Castle, he went to seek for his Queen; and when he could not find her, he was moved over all the parts of his body, and sought about all the Tower, so long till at last he found out the hole that the Knight had caused to be made; and when he saw that he wept bitterly, crying out: Alas, alas, this Knight in whom I had so great confidence, hath robbed me of my Wife! was not I a fool, that gave more faith unto the words of a Knight, than to mine own eyes?

Then said the Empress: my Lord, have you understood what I have said? The Emperor said, as well as may be, Then answered the Empress: Remember how he trusted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceived him: in like manner do you trust the Seven Wise Masters, who labour to destroy me your Wife; and you give more credit to their words, than to your own eyes: for you have seen how your ungracious Son hath rent and scratched me, whereof yet I bear tokens and marks about me, as you may see; also you know well how your accursed Son hath shamed me, and you mark not how they defend him in this his folly. Therefore it is to be feared, that it will happen to you worse than to the King of whom I have spoken unto you.

The Emperor replied: I will believe mine own Eyes before I will give credence to their

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their words, and therefore to morrow I shall
justice upon my Son. The next day the Em-
peroz commanded his Son to be brought before
him: which being done, he commanded him
to be led to the place of Execution, there to
suffer death according to the Law. Then there
began to arise great noise and bewailing a-
mongst the common people for the death of the
Emperors onely Son. At last when the se-
venth Master heard it, he ran immediately
unto the Officers, which were leading him to
the Gallows, and said: my friends, I pray
you not to make overmuch haste, but stay your
hands a while, for I think this day, (with the
help of the Almighty God) to save him from all
perils: and from thence the Master hastened him
to the Emperors Palace, and did him reve-
rence according to his accustomed duty: But
the Emperoz with great indignation made
him this answer: never more have you any
joy in this world, for that you have sent my Son
home untaught and dumb, whom I delivered
unto you well speaking; for which cause you
shall all be put to death with him. The Master
answered: O most noble Emperoz, the time
is not long betwixt this and to morrow noon;
then (by the grace of God) you shall hear him
speak discretly, and shall declare the truth of
all things, and this I promise you he will
perform to the full, upon pain of my life, if you
will

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will spare him so long time: if you find it not so, then take my life, and the lives of us all. Then said the Emperoz, if I might but hear my Son speak, it would give me sufficient content, and I would not desire longer to live. Then answered the Master: all this and more you shall hear and see, and confess it to be true, if you will but abide this little time; and then the strife that hath been betwixt us and the Emperors will clearly be decided. And if you suffer him to be put to death through the words of your most ungodly Wife, I tell you of a truth, it shall happen worse to you, than it did to a Knight that died for a little blood that he saw his Wife to bleed, to whom afterwards she was most unnatural: then said the Emperoz; that example would I fain hear. Then said the Master; let your Son be called again, and I shall tell you so notable Example, that during your life you may beware of the unstableness of women. Then the Emperoz said, I shall; go call my Son again upon condition, that to morrow I shall hear him speak, as you have promised: the Master said; do that my Lord, for it shall be so, and began to tell as followeth.

The Example of the Seventh Master.

There was a Knight that had a fair young Wife, whom he loved intirely, so that he could



could not be out of her sight. It happened on a time that they played together at Chess, and the Knight by chance had a knife in his hand, and she fortun'd to smite her hand on the knife, so that a little blood began to appear. When the Knight saw his wife bleed, he fell to the ground in a swoon; his wife seeing that, cast cold water on his face, insomuch that he came a little to himself, and said lightly, call the Curate with the Holy Sacrament, for I must die; for the blood that I have seen come from your finger hath smitten death to my heart; When the Priest came, and comforted him much, and administred the Sacrament unto him, and anon he died: for whose death there was great sorrow, especially by his Wife: also after the

obier.

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obsequies were finished; she went and lay upon the Grave, and there made great lamentation, and said, she would never depart thence, but as a Turtle-dove she would for the love of her Husband there abide, and die. Then went her Friends and Neighbours unto her, and said: what availeth this for his soul, to live here weeping until you die? it is better that you go home, and there give Alms for the love of God, and that shall more avail your soul, then in this place to abide. To whom she answered: I may you hold your peace, you are evil counsellors; consider ye not, how I am from him separated by death, for a little blood he saw come out of my finger: therefore I shall never from hence depart.

Her Friends hearing that, made her a little House nigh the Grave, and putting therein all things necessary, went their ways, thinking within a while she would be weary to be alone, and so desolate from all company, and thereby desire again the company of the people.

In the City was then a Law, that if an Offender against the Law were hanged, the Sheriff all night should watch the dead body armed; and if it happened that the body hanged were stolen, the Sheriff should lose all his Lands and his life at the Kings pleasure. It happened soon after the Knight was dead, that a man should be hanged for trespassing, so that the Sheriff all
A
that

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that night watched by the Gallows, not far from the City, and the Church-yard was so far from the same: then began the Sheriff to be so cold, that he could not possibly endure it, he was even ready to die, except he might speedily warm him, it was so extreme cold, and so great a frost, and by chance he espying a fire on the Church-yard, he hastened, and came thereto, when he was come near to it, he knocked at the little house. The woman said, who at this time knocketh at the house of the sorrowful woman. He answered, I am the Sheriff that hath endured much cold, and am ready to freeze to death unless without delay you let me warm my self. She said unto him: I fear that if I let you in, ye should cause me to be more heavy. He said, I promise you, that I shall say no words to your displeasure. Then she let him in; and when he had sitten a while by the fire, and was warmed, he said unto her; O fair woman, with your licence would I fain speak but one word with you. She answered, Sir, say what pleaseth you. Then he said, O Lady, you be a fair Gentlewoman, rich and young, were it not more convenient for you to dwell at home, and to give alms, then to waste yourself here with weeping? She said, Sir Knight, had I known this before, you had not come in, for I say to you, as I have said to others oftentimes, you know my Husband loved me so well, that for

little blood he saw me blæd out of my finger, he
 is dead; wherefore I will here die for the love
 of him. As the Knight heard this, he took leave
 and went again unto the Gallows; and when
 he was come thither, and saw that the Thief
 (he left there hanging) was stollen away, he
 began to wax heavy, and said: wo is me, what
 shall I do: for I have lost my life, and all my
 goods: and going up and down thus full of sor-
 row, he knew not what way to turn himself;
 at last he concluded to go to the desolate Lady,
 and shew her the heaviness of his heart, to wit
 if she could give him any good counsel: when
 he was come thither, he called, and she asked
 him the cause: and he said, Madam, I am
 the Sheriff that was right now with you, and
 I would fain shew you the secrets of my heart,
 therefore I pray you open the doo. And he
 went in, and said unto her: O most vertuous
 Lady, I am now come to have your advice;
 for you know the Lawes of the Land are, that
 when any man is hanged, and stolln off the
 Gallows, the Sheriffs life and goods are in
 the Kings hands: Now it happened while I
 was here, and warmed me, the Thief was
 stollen; therefore I pray fair Lady, for the love
 of God, give me your best advice, what to do.
 She answered: I have compassion upon you,
 for by the Law you have lost your life and goods
 to the King; do now after my counsel; and

ye shall lose neither: he answered, I am to you greatly bound, hoping to have good comfort. She said, will you then promise to take me to your wife: The Knight answered: would God you were indeed so minded: but I fear you disdain to humble your self unto so poor a Knight: she said I give you my will there; and he gave her again his will, and consented to be her Knight during his life. Then said she, ye know such a day my Lord was buried, which for the love of me died; take him out of the Sepulchre, and hang him up in stead of the Thief. The Knight answered: Lady, your counsel is very good; then went they and opened the Sepulchre and drew him out. The Knight said unto the Lady, how shall we now do? because ere the Thief was hanged, two of his teeth were smitten out, and I fear me, if that were perceived, I shall die the death. Then the Lady said: Take a stone and strike out two of his teeth. The Knight answered, Madam, that may not I do, for while he lived he was my trusty Friend, and it should be to me great rebuke, to do so disloyal a deed to his body, being dead. She answered: for your love I shall do it; and presently took a stone, and smote out two of his teeth, and said to the Sheriff: take him and hang him upon the Gallows like the Thief. The Knight said: I fear to do it, for the Thief in taking was wounded upon his head, and

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and he lacked his ears. O Madam God for-
 bid that I do so to the dead body, that I loved so
 well in his life. Then said she, give me your
 sword, and I shall for your love do it, and so
 took the sword, and smote a mayly stroak on
 the dead mans forehead, and cut of his ears,
 and when she had thus done, she said, now hang
 him. Then the knight answered, yet I fear
 to hang him, for the Thief wanted both his
 stones, and if he be searched, and not found
 without, all my labour is lost. Then said she,
 I never saw man so fearful, seeing the mat-
 ter is so sure: Take a knife, and cut off his
 stones. And he answered: That I may not
 do in any wise, and therefore I pray you spare
 me, for you know what a man is without his
 stones. She said: for the love of you I shall
 do it, and took the knife, and cut of her Hus-
 bands stones; and said now take the Thiefe
 thus disfigured, and hang him up without dread:
 and they went both, and hung the body upon
 the Gallows; and so was the Sheriff deliver-
 ed. Then said the Lady, now ye be delivered
 from all dangers by my counsel, therefore I
 desire you (according to promise) that ye wed
 me. The knight said, I have made a vow
 that I shall never wed other so long as I live
 which I shall perform: then he said, O thou
 most shameful and worst of all women, who
 would take thee to wife: an honourable and

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loving Knight was thy Husband, who for a little blood that he saw issue out of thy finger died. Now hast thou smitten out two of his teeth, cut off his ears and stones, and made a great wound in his head; what Devil would marry thee: therefore thou shalt never shame good man more: I will rid thee of thy life; and so drew his Sword, and with one stroke smote off her head.

Then the Master said unto the Emperor: My Lord, have you understood what I have said: He answered, right well: Amongst all women this was the worst, and the Knight rewarded her accordingly, that she should no more do shame. The Emperor said moreover, O good Master, might I but hear my Son speak I should have no care of my self. Then said the Master, to morrow you shall hear him speak, and he shall shew the truth of all the variances betwixt us and the Emperess, as I hope, and so took leave of the Emperor and departed.

Now DIOCLESIAN, the Emperors Son complained on the Emperess; and how he excused himself to her complaint.

After that all the Masters took counsel how they should bring the Child out of Prison, and lead him to the Palace; so they went to the Child in Prison before midday.

counsel to hear : to whom the Child said, what
 you will, shall please ; but busie not your selves
 how I shall answer, or what I shall say ; for
 with joy I shall answer all that shall be de-
 manded of me. When the seven Wise Mas-
 ters heard that they were exceeding joyful, and
 cloathed him in Purple, and Cloth of Gold ;
 and two of the Masters went before him ; one
 on his right hand, and another on his left, and
 the other three followed him, and before all
 went twelue men with Instruments of Musick,
 who brought him with great melody to the
 Palace. When the Emperour heard this mela-
 dy, he demanded what it was : then it was told
 him by the standers by, saying, mighty Empe-
 rour, it is your Son which cometh before you,
 and before all your Lords, to speak and excuse
 himself of all that is laid to his charge. The
 Emperour said, that is good tydings, if I might
 hear my Son speak. And when the Child was
 come into the Palace, he rode to his Father, and
 said unto him : Hail my most dear and Royal
 Father.

And when the Emperour heard the voice of his
 Son, he was so gladd, that for joy he fell to the
 earth, but his Son hastened to take up his Fa-
 ther again, and when he came to himself, then
 began the Son to declare the whole matter to
 his Father : and there came so great a multi-
 tude to the Palace, to hear the Child speak, and

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the noise of them was so great, that the Child could not be heard. The Emperour considering that, caused money to be thrown into the streets, that the people therewith should be buffed out of the Palace, the better to hear the Child speak: but they regarded not the money. When the Emperour perceived that, he commanded silence on pain of death: And when they were all still the Child began to speak as followeth: O most dear Father, before I speak any thing, I intreat you, that the Emperess with all her Chamber maids may be present. So the Emperour commanded the Emperess with all her Maids to come without delay. The Emperess hearing that (in great fear) came with her Maids: and the Child bade them

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them to stand before the people on a rold, that he might see them. Then said the Child, Sir, behold the Chamber-maid that standeth there in gown, (whom ye know the Emperess loveth above all other) command her to be uncloathed before us all and see what she is. The Emperoz said, dear Son, that would shame us all, to have a woman stand naked before us; he said, if it be a woman, it is my shame; if not, let the shame abide in her. When she was uncloathed, she appeared to be a man, whereat they wondered.

The Complaint of the Emperors Son, on the Emperess

Then said the Son unto the Father, behold this Ribauld hath many a night lain with your Wife in your Chamber, and hath defiled your Bed, and him the Emperess loved above all others, which thing you did not know.

When the Emperoz had seen these things, he with great indignation gave command that both the Emperess and Ribauld should be burnt; but the Son answered; My Lord and Father, make no haste to give judgment, till I have reproved her for the grievous slanders she did falsely accuse me of, and declared how unjustly she hath complained of me, and sought all means how to take my life. When said the Emperoz: My dear Son, I commit all the judgment

ment into your hands. The Son answered, if she be found a lyar, the Law shall give sentence against her: but my Royal Father, when you sent for me, at her earnest request, then I with my Masters beheld the Stars, by which I perceived, that if I should have spoken unto you, or any living Creature within the space of seven days: I should have died a most shameful death, and for that cause only I did forbear to speak until this present.

And whereas the Empress most unjustly hath accused me, that I would have ravished her, therein she lyeth falsely; for she most adulterously provoked me to defile the Bed of my most gracious Lord and Father the Emperour. And when she in no wise could bring me there to, she took Pen, Ink, and Paper, and had me write the cause wherefore I would not yield. And when I had written the cause thereof, and how I would not my Fathers Orchard defile, then she began to tear her Cloaths, and scratch her visage, so that it gushed forth with blood, and cryed with a loud voice: This your Son (having a mind full of lust) would have wronged your Princely Bed, and I resisting his lust, most inhumanely hath he torn my flesh. When the Emperour heard this, he beheld her with a full countenance, and said in this manner: O wretched woman, was not thy husband sufficient to fulfil thy soul and lecher-

rous

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rous appetite, but wouldest also have made my Son: Then fell the Empress at the Emperors feet, and cryed for mercy. The Emperoz said: O thou cursed and unhappy woman, thou askest forgiveness, but art worthy of none, for thou hast deserved to die in three respects: first, in that thou hast committed Adultery: secondly, in that thou most laciviously hast provoked my Son to a most abominabled sin, and laid the crime falsly and unjustly upon him: thirdly and lastly, in that thou hast every day incited me by thy false tales to put my Son to death; therefore the Law shall have its course against thee, and condemn thee unto death, as thou hast deserved.

Then answered his Son, Most noble Father, you know well that for her leasings, I was daily led to hanging: But my Masters with the help of God hath delivered me. O my most honourable Lord and Father, it was told you by the Empress, that I should also (by the help of my Masters) depose you: and that I did labour by all means to destroy you, and to sit in your throne: would you not then have much grieved: have you not the whole Command and Government of this your Kingdom: Wherefore then should I not use all the skill I have to help you, my most honoured Father, rather than any way to destroy you: And seeing from you I have my living, I will repute you my Sovereign

reign Lord and Father, during my life, and not
in any manner deprive you of your honour,
but busie my self about governing the same,
and all your commands I shall fulfil: but it is
as the Father that cast his Son into the Sea to
drown him, because he said he should live to be
a greater Lord than his Father was; and yet
the Son by providence was saved, and became
greater than his Father, and yet was no hin-
derance to him, but promised them much; also
you see, that my life and carriage is never like
to hinder you, but shall be to your comfort.
Then said the Emperour; blessed be the Al-
mighty God, and the hour I begat thee, and de-
sired such a Son, that I find so expert in all
things; tell me an example, by which we may
perfectly understand thy wisdom and my heart
the better to enjoy thee.

Then said the Son, honourable Father, com-
mand first silence to be made, that I be not let-
ted, till I have done: and when that is ended,
give Sentence according to Law upon me and
the Emperess. Then commanded the Emperour
silence, and the Child began to tell in ample
manner as followeth.

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The Example of DIOCLESIAN the Emperors Son.

There was a Knight which had but one Son that he loved right dear in the beginning, as ye have loved me, whom he delivered to a master that dwelt in a far Country, to be brought up in learning and knowledge. This Child as he waxed in years, increased in wisdom and knowledg very much. And when he had been with his Master seven years, his Father desired to see him, and sent Letters that he should come again into his Country, and visit his friends, as you sent for me. The Child was obedient to his Father, and came; At whose coming he did exceedingly joy, for that he was grown as well in comeliness of body, as in doctrine and learning, and to every man appeared pleasant and gentle.

It happened upon a day that the Father and Mother sitting at the Table, the Child serving them, a Nightingale came flying before the Window where they sate, and began to sing so sweetly, that they marvelled: And the Knight said: O how sweetly this Bird singeth! Well were he that could understand his song, and shew the interpretation thereof. Then said the Son: my worshipful Father, the song of this Nightingale I could declare, but I fear your displeasure. The Father said: say boldly

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boldly my Son the interpretation of the Bird, and ye shall prove whether I be angry or not, but I shall mark well the cause of my anger. When the Son heard that, he said: the Nightingale said in her Song, That I shall become a great Lord, honoured of all men, namely of my Father, who shall bring me water to wash, and my Mother shall hold the Towel. The Father said, thou shalt never have such service of us, nor such dignity shall follow thee, and in great madness and woodness he took his Son upon his shoulders, and ran to the Sea, and cast him in, and said: lie there interpreter. The Child could swim, and swimming to Land, where he was four days without Meat or drink: the fifth day there came a Ship, and

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the Child saw that, he called to the Shipmen, and said: for the love of God deliver me from death. The Ship-men saw it was a fair young man, and had compassion on him, and with the Boat fetched him aboard, and carryed him into a far Country, and sold him to a Duke. The Child grew very proper and fair, and the Duke loved him, and had him greatly in favour.

Upon a time the King of that Realm called all the great Lords and Noble-men within the Realm together, to sit in Council. This Duke then prepared to go to the said Council; and giving great regard to the wisdom of the Child, took the Child with him. And when they were assembled before the King and his Council: My well beloved Lords and Friends, said the King, will you know the cause wherefore I have assembled you? They answered: we all are (Sovereign Lord) at your command. Then said the King, it is a secret that I shall shew you: if any man can declare what it signifieth. I swear unto him by my Crown, I will give him my only Daughter in Marriage, and he shall be my fellow in the Realm so long as I live; and after my death shall possess my whole Kingdom. And the Mystery is this.

Three Ravens follow me still wheresoever I go, crying out with such horrible voices, that the pain is grievous for me to hear them, and much more to behold their looks: wherefore if
there

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there be any man which knoweth the cause of this their earnest following of me, and can shew what they mean by their crying, and aboid them away from me, without doubt I shall fulfil this promise that I have made. And as the King had thus said, there was none found in all the Councel, that understood the cause, or could drive away the Ravens. Then said the Child unto the Duke: My Lord, think you the King will perform what he hath promised: Will you said the Duke, that I give the King knowledge of what you can do: Then the Child said: I will my life pledge, that I shall make good what I have said. When the Duke heard that, he went to the King and said: My Lord and King, here is a young man that doth promise to satisfie you, in all that you desire touching these Ravens, if you will fulfil what you have promised. The King swore by the Crown of his Kingdom, the which I have promised shall be fulfilled. Then he brought the Child before the King, and when the King beheld him, he spoke unto him after this manner: O fair Child, can you answer this my question: the Child answered, Yea my Lord, and that in the best manner: Your question is, Wherefore the Ravens follow you, and horribly call upon you: To which I answer: It happened, that there were two Ravens, a Male and a Female, that brought out between them

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them a third Raven, and in that place there was a great famine and scarcity of all manner of Food, that Men, Beasts, and Fowls dyed for want. Now the third Raven was at that time very young, and not able to fly abroad, to get her living: The Female she left it, seeking how she might get her own living; and came no more to the feast. The Male seeing that, with great penury and labour fed the young Raven till he was able to fly: and when the dearth was gone, the Female Raven returned home again to the young Raven, and would accompany with him; but the Male seeing that, would have driven her away, saying: He in his great necessity left his company, and therefore he should have no fellowship with her. She pledged, that she had in his hatching great labour and sorrow, and suffered much penury, and in that cause she should rather enjoy his company than the Male.

For this cause my Sovereign Lord they told you, asking which of them shall have company with the young Raven, and this is the cause of this horrible clamour that they make unto you. But my honoured Lord, when you have given sentence, you shall never more be troubled with their crying. Then answered the King, because the Female hath forsaken the young Raven in his necessity, it standeth not justice that she should not follow him, but

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do without this fellowship. And whereas she saith, that in hatching and bringing forth she had great pain and travel, that helpeth not, for her pain was turned into joy, as soon as she saw the young Raven in the world. But in regard the Male is the cause of the generation of every Beast of the earth, and every soul of the air, and also because the young Raven in his necessity was sustained, and fed by the Male; therefore I conclude both for judgment and sentence definitive, that the young Raven shall abide with the Male, and not with the Female.



When the Ravens heard that sentence, with great noise and cry they flew up into the air, and were no more seen in all the Region.

This done, the King demanded of the young man

man, what his name was: he answered, I am called Alexander: Then said the King, I will that you grant me one request, which is, that from henceforth you take me, and none other, for your Father: for you shall have my Daughter to Wife, and the whole Government and possession of my Realm. Young Alexander abode still there with the King, and every man did exceedingly love him; for he began to haunt Tusts and Tournneys, wherein he always won the Prize before all other in Egypt, so that his pier was not to be found: neither was there so hard a question put to him, but he could make known the true sense and meaning thereof.

At that time there was an Emperour named Titus, who excelled in courtesie and curiosity all other Emperours, Kings, and Princes in the world: insomuch that such fame flew over the world of it; that whosoever would profit in winning, manners, or behaviour, must go to the Emperours Court. When Alexander heard thereof, he said to the King: my most honourable Lord and Father, you know that the world is full of fame of the Emperour, that it is very delectable to abide in his Court: wherefore, if it please you my renowned Lord and Father, I would very gladly go to his Court that I may obtain more wisdom, and growe prompter in Manners and Behaviour, then now I am. Whereupon answered the King: it pleaseth

me right well; but take with you plenty of gold and silber, and other necessaries, that you my honour there may save, and have also that which is to you most requisite and necessary. And it seemeth unto me most expedient, that before your departing you do marry my Daughter.

Then answered Alexander; Will it please you my Lord to spare me at this time, and at my return I shall wed her with all honour unto her appertaining. The King answered; Since it is your will to go unto the Emperors Court, I give my consent: then Alexander took his leave of the King, and took with him abundance of treasure, and went to the Emperors Court; where when he was come, with many followers he went before the Emperor, and fell upon his knees, and did him Reverence.

The Emperor rose from his Seat Imperial, and kissed him, and asked whence, and what he was, and wherefore he was come: he answered, I am Son and Heir to the King of Egypt, and am come to serve your most high Majesty, if it please you to accept of me. The Emperor said, he was heartily welcome, and committed him to his Steward, and made him his Carver. The Steward ordained him a fair Chamber, and provided all things that were necessary to the same; and Alexander behaved him-

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himself so well, that in short time he was beloved of all people.

Not long after came the Kings Son of France to serbe the Emperoz, and to learn good qualities and comely behaviour: him the Emperoz received honourably, demanding his name, and of what kindred he was come: he answered, I am Son to the King of France, and I have to name Lodowick your Servant: Then said the Emperoz, I have made Alexander my Carver, and you shall be my Cup-bearer, that always ye may serbe at my Table; and commanded the Steward to assign him a Lodging, whom he placed with Alexander. These two were so like in stature, visage, and condition, that hardly the one might be known from the other, but that Alexander was more cunning than Lodowick, for he was Feminine and shame-faced; and these young men loved well.

The Emperoz had only one Daughter, named Florentine, right fait and gracious, that should be his Heir, whom he loved inticely; she had a Court and Servants assigned: to her the Emperoz every day accustomed to send from his Table of his dainties, in token of love, by Alexander, insomuch that the Daughter began to have him marbelously in her favour, because of his wise and comely behaviour.

Upon a day Alexander had such business, that he serbed not at the Table, nor none other

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in his room: Lodowick perceiuing that, serued for him, and as soon as he had serued in his last service upon his knee, the Emperoz commanded him to bear a Dish to his Daughtre as he was wont, thinking he was Alexander. Then Lodowick went to the Emperozs Daughtre, saluting her with great Reuerence, and set the meat before her; till then he had not seen her. She perceiuing it was not Alexander, said to him, What is your Name, and whose Son are you: He answered her, Madam, I am the Kings Son of France, and my name is Lodowick: she said, I thank you for your pains: and then he departed. In the mean time came Alexander, to the Table, and they fulfilled their Service.

Dinner being done, Lodowick went to bed soe sick: Alexander perceiuing that, went to his Chamber, and said unto him, O my best beloved Friend and Fellow, how is it with you, and what is the cause of your infirmity: He answered, the cause I know not, but I am soe sick, and fear I cannot escape death. Alexander said: The cause of your infirmity I know well; for to day as you bear the meat to the Emperozs Daughtre, ye beheld her beauty so fervently, that your heart was raiued with her love. Whereupon he answered, O Alexander, all the Physicians in the World could not more truly iudge my sickness, but I

feare it will be my death. Then said Alexander, be of good comfort, I will help you unto my power; and forthwith went to a Merchant, and bought with his own money a fair Cloth, set with precious Stones, unknown to Lodowick, and presented it in his behalf to the Princess: as soon as she beheld it, she asked where he had that costly Cloath: he said, Madam, of the Son of the most Christian King of France, who sendeth it you for your love; for he having but once beheld your Princely face, is grown sick even unto death; wherefore if you suffer him to perish, you will never recover honour.

Then said she: Good Alexander, would you counsel me to lose my Virginitie? God defend that; and be ye sure Alexander, that for such Messages you shall never win thanks of me: therefore go out of my sight, and speak no more thereof. When Alexander heard that, did obedience, and departed.

The next day Alexander went again to the City, and bought a Chapler that was twice the value of the Cloth, and went to the Princess Chamber, and gave it her on the behalf of Lodowick. And when she saw that costly gift, she said unto him, I marvel that so often you have seen and spoken with me, and have not done your own errand in speaking for your self, but for another. Then answered he, O Madam, I have not done so, because my birth is

not to be compared with yours: also my heart was never so wounded: and he that hath a good fellow, is bound for to do him true fellowship. And therefore now excellent Princess, of your most abundant pittie, have compassion on him, and make him whole that you have so sore wounded, that it be not for ever laid to your cruelty and hardness of heart, she answered him go your way, for at this time I will give you no answer, and as he heard that he departed.

And the third day he went to the City, and bought a Girdle that was of more value, and costlier than the Chaplet was, and presented it to her in the behalf of Lodowick: and when she beheld that gift so precious, she said unto Alexander, say to Lodowick that he come to my Chamber about the third hour in the night, and he shall find the doo open: and Alexander hearing that, was glad, and went to his fellow and said: my best beloved fellow be of good comfort, for I have conquered the Princess to you, and this night I shall bring thee to her Chamber. And when that was said, he started up as though he had awaked out of his sleep, and as well revived, and for great joy became well: the next night Alexander took Lodowick and brought him to the Chamber of the Lady, with whom he was in solace all night: and from that time forth, all her mind was upon him, so that there was but one love between them both.

And

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And after that Lodowick used often times to visit her, so that in process of time it came to the ears of the Knights and Gentlemen of the Court, how that the Emperors Daughter was known by Lodowick: And they conspired among themselves how they might find him, and intrap him, so as to take him. As Alexander had knowledge thereof, he armed him to withstand them; and when the Knights understood that, they feared Alexander, and suffered his fellow to go in peace. Alexander many times put himself in jeopardy for him, he not knowing thereof: but the Princess knew it well.

In short time after came Letters to Alexander of the death of the King of Egypt, that he should hastily come and receive his Kingdom with honour and joy; and that shewed he unto the Princess and to Lodowick, and also of his departing: wherefore they were sorrowful; he said also to the Emperoz, my honourable Lord, pleasech it you to understand, I have received Letters of the death of my Father, wherefore it behoveth me to go and receive the Kingdom, and that you will be pleased to give me leave to depart; and for all the benefits to me done, I offer my self and all my goods: and rather than I should by my going any way displease you my Lord, I will forsake all my Realm, and abide with you still.

Then

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Then said the Emperoz, know you for certain that for your departure I am right heaby, for you were the best Serbant in my Court: but it becometh not an Emperoz to hinder his Serbants from their advancements; but rather promote them to higher honour: therefore go you unto our Treasurer, and he shall deliuer you as much Gold as you will have, and in the Name of God (and my Blessing) go into your Counry. And thus Alexander had leave of the Emperoz, and bad him farewell: and they were also sorrowful for his departure, for he was beloved of all.

Lodowick with the Princess brought him on his way seven miles at least: after that Alexander would not suffer them to go any further: then fell they both to the ground with great heaviness. And Alexander took and lifted him up, and comforted him with fair words, and said: O Lodowick, my best beloved fellow! I warn you that the secrets betwixt you and my Lady, you hide as privily as you may, and take good heed to all things: for I wot another shall come and be in my stead, that shall enjoy you of the favour and grace that you stand in with the Emperoz, and day and night shall be in wait to take you in a fault, and to put you to rebuke. Then answered Lodowick, and said: O Alexander, I shall beware as much as is possible: but how shall I do when I shall

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want your company : Therefore one thing I shall desire you, that you take this Ring of me for a remembrance. Then said he, I shall for the love of you gladly receive your Ring : and yet I shall never without the Ring forget you : and so he committed them both to God. Then they embraced each other about the Neck, kissed and departed.

Not long after the Kings Son of Spain, named Guido, was received of the Emperour in the room of Alexander, to whom the Steward assigned Alexanders Chamber : the which was very sore against the will of Lodowick, but he could not help it.

Guido seeing that Lodowick against his will had him in his fellowship, he grew envious against him, so Lodowick for a long time, for fear of the same Guido, kept him from the company of the Lady : nevertheless afterwards, being overcome with her love, sometimes he went again unto her as before. Guido perceiving the same, waited so long thereon, that he knew the truth, and was therefore certain that the Princess was by Lodowick known, and he had company with her.

Upon a time it happened that the Emperour stood in the Hall, and praised Alexander for his gentleness and wisdom. Guido hearing that, said : my Lord, he is not so worthy to be commended as you imagine, for he hath a long time
been

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been a Traytor in your House. Then the Emperour said, Tell me how? Guido said, You have but one only daughter, which shall be your Heir, and her Lodowick hath defiled, through the help of Alexander; and he goeth to her every night as it pleaseth him. As soon as the Emperour heard thereof, he was sore moved and Lodowick happened to come through the Hall; and as the Emperour saw him, he said, What hear I of thee, thou untrue body? if it be proved thou shalt die the most shamefullest death that can be devised. Lodowick said: my Lord, what is the cause? Guido, answered: I deposed here before my Lord, that thou hast defiled his only Daughter, and every night dost Fornication with her: and with battle I shall make it good upon thy body, with my body. Then said Lodowick, I am innocent, and falsly thou dost bely me, and thereupon I hold the battle, and trust to God thy fallshood shall come upon thine own head. Then the Emperour assigned them the day of Combate. That done, Lodowick went unto the Lady, and shewed her the cause, and the day of Battle, by the Emperour assigned, and in what manner Guido had accused him; And said unto her, Now it becometh me to have your counsel, or else I must die; for you know it would not avail me to have gain-said the Battel, without I should have yielded my self guilty: Guido is

hardy

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hardy, that his like is none but Alexander, and I
am feeble, and therefore if I fight the Battle a-
gainst him, I were but a dead man; and so you
shall abide rebuke. Then said he, follow my
counsel, in that you mistrust your self, go hastily
unto my Father, and say, ye have received
letters, whereby you are assured, that the King
your Father is sore sick, and lieth upon his
Death-bed, and he desireth to speak with you in
person, and to dispose of his Kingdom before
he departeth his life: so desire him to give you
leave for the love of your Father, to go to visite
him, and that he will prolong the day of battle;
that in the mean season you may go and come,
and when you have gotten leave, as hastily as
you can, secretly go to King Alexander, and
take him apart, and shew him the cause of your
coming; and desire him in this extremity, and
he will help and save us.

When Lodowick heard this counsel, it pleased
him well, and he did according; and he
having obtained leave, and respite of the Battle
assigned, he departed towards Egypt, and ne-
ver staid till he came into King Alexanders
Castle. When King Alexander understood his
coming, he was very glad, and went to meet
him, receiving him honourably, and wondering
much at his coming.

Then said Lodowick, O my dear Lord, and
best beloved friend, my life and death is in your
hands,

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hands, for as you said before, that I should have another Fellow, which should lie in wait to espy me and destroy me, without I looked more wisely to my self; so long as I could I did abstain from her; but afterwards the Kings Son of Spain watched me till he perceived the truth: in the end he accused me to the Emperour, so that on the eighth from this day, I must be ready to fight with him body against body: and ye know he is a very strong hardy man, and I am weak and feeble: therefore hath Florentine counselled me, that I should not hide this matter from you, for she knoweth you to be a faithful friend, that would not leave us in this necessity.

Then said Alexander, is there any that knoweth of your coming unto me besides Florentine? he answered him, no creature living. for I took leave of the Emperour to go visit my Father lying grievously sick. When Alexander asked him what counsel hath Florentine given you, and how might I help you? he said, O my faithful friend, thus she hath counseled me: considering that we be like each other, you should come and perform the battle, and no one would know you but she, and the battle done, I would come again to the Court, and you return to your own Country. When he asked him when the battle should be: and he said, eight days hence.

Then

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Then said Alexander: if I but one day tarry before I depart, I cannot come by the day prescribed, tell me what I shall do, I have bidden all my Subjects, that to morrow they should come to my Wedding, and if I should go, then is the day lost; if I go not to the battle, then Florentine and you are undone: What think you is best, when Lodowick heard that, he fell to the earth, and began to sorrow without measure, saying, sorrow comes suddenly to me on all sides. Then said Alexander, be of good comfort, for I shall not forsake you, though I should lose my life and Kingdom: but hear what I have thought upon: seeing we are both alike, so that the one cannot be known from the other; and as for me, I am not rightly known here, but my Barons and other my Subjects will take you for me; therefore you shall here abide, and marry my Wife in my stead, and hold the Feast and Nuptials, and do all things as if my self were present, but when you come to bed with my Wife, look you there be true and faithful: and I shall without tarrying take my horse, and ride where the battle shall be; and if God give me victory, I will come again secretly, and you shall go again unto your best beloved. This done Alexander bid Lodowick farewell, and took his journey towards the Emperors Court to fight the battel with Guido; and Lodowick tarried in Egypt instead of King Alexander.

Next

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Next morning came Lodowick, as though he had been King Alexander, and solemnly in the face of the Church he espoused King Alexanders Wife, and solemnized the Marriage Feast, with great Royalty of delicates and dainties: plenty of all Wines, and divers Instruments of Musick, with great joy and cheer for the Noblemen, and all other that were there assembled. And when the night was come he went to bed with the Queen, and laid between him and her a naked Sword: whereat she wondering, but saying nothing, and so he lay with her every night while Alexander was gone.



Now King Alexander at the day prefixed, came unto the Emperour, and said: O most Sovereign Lord, I have left my Father very sick

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sick and in hazard of death: nevertheless I am
came to perform my promise, with a full reso-
lution to defend my honour. The Emperour
said: ye do honourably, and according to the
valour of a Nobleman; and Fortune shall fa-
vour you (I hope) in your righteous quarrel.

And when the Emperours Daughter under-
stood that Alexander was come, she sent for him;
and when he came to her, she courteously em-
braced him, and with great joy kissed him, and
blessed the time that she saw him again: and
demanded where he had left her love Lodowick?
Then he declared unto her the whole circum-
stances, and how he had left him lying in his
knealm. So he took his leave of her, and went
to Lodowicks chamber, no creature thinking
but that he was Lodowick, except Florentine
only. The next day before Alexander went to
the Field, he said unto the Emperour in the
presence of Guido: My most renowned Ser-
vants, Guido hath falsely accused me un-
to your Noble Grace, in saying that I should
be so familiar with the Princess your most
precious and only Daughter, to the great dis-
honour of your noble person, and hers: I swear
by the holy Evangelist, that she was never in
any wise known by me, as he hath alleged un-
to you, which I shall make good upon his body
with the aid and help of God: and so he said.
And so saying he went to the Field. Then

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Then answered Guido, yet once I say again, and swear by the holy Evangelist, and by all that God hath made, that thou hast had knowledge of, and defiled the Emperors Daughter, and that I will make good upon thy head.

Whereupon they leapt upon their Coursers, and ran so fiercely one at another, with their Spears, that they both broke and shivered in pieces: Then they drew their Swords, and fought so long, until at last Alexander with great might at one stroke, smote off Guido's head, and sent it unto the Emperors Daughter, whereof she was glad, and bare it unto her Father, and said, Father, behold the head of him that had so sadly defamed you and me.

When the Emperoz perceived the Victory, he sent for Alexander, whom he thought to be Lodowick, and said: O Lodowick, this day your honour and my Daughters you have saved, you shall be to morrow in my favour, and who soever shall again defame you, shall for ever stand in my indignation.

Then answered Alexander: God alwayes helpech them that trust in him, and revengeth wrong done to the innocent: But most renowned Lord, one thing I intreat, that it will please you to give me leave to go see how it standeth with my Father, whom I left so sick, and if he be any thing amended, I shall continually return. Then the Emperoz said: that

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that pleaseth me; but you may in no wise leave me; for I cannot be without your presence.

Alexander having taken leave of the Emperour, with all speed he could he rode back unto his Realm: Lodowick having heard of his return, with much joy met him, and friendly received him, saying: most true friend, of all friends, tell me how fortune has favoured you in this your journey and business and to what end have you brought it: When he said, go to the Emperour and serve him as before, for I have gotten you more favour at his hands then you had before, and have also cut off the head of your greatest enemy.

Then said Lodowick: You have not only at this time saved my life, but preserved me here before, which kindness I shall never forget, neither as yet can I requite; but God reward you, and so he departed to the Emperours Court; and there was no man that had any knowledge of the absence of King Alexander, except Lodowick.

When night was come, he went to bed to the Queen, and as soon as he was laid, he began sweetly to embrace her; and with tender words he kissed her. Then said she, you have made this time tedious, in that you have the with nothing of friendship or love: how may this be. Then said he, wherefore say you that? She said,

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every night you have into betwixt us a naked
Sword, and have never turned towards me till
now. And when he heard that, he thought on
the truth of his fellows, and said: O my dear La-
dy, it was not done for any ill will, but for repal-
of Love. But she said to her self: that love you
shall have no more, but despite, and I will be
revenged upon thee.



Then there was a Knight that she had a
little loved, and she began to love him more,
and more, till at the last they sought how they
might destroy the King, and therefore they
got poison and poisoned him, so that if he had
not been strong of complexion, he had died
thereof: for it wrought sore, that it caused
him to be a most foul and horrible Wretch,

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as was eber seen upon the earth. The Lords and Noblemen of the said Realm, and the Queen also, seeing this, despised him and said, It becometh not a Leper to reign ober us, for he cannot beget any beautiful Heirs, and so he was deposed of his Dignity Royall, and driven out of his Realm.

In the mean time dyed the Emperour of Rome, and Lodowick married his Daughter, and after that Lodowicks Father died, so that Lodowick reigned both Emperour of Rome, and King of France at once.

When King Alexander heard of that, he thought in himself, How my fellow reigneth, and ruleth both the Empire of Rome, and the Realm of France: To whom may I go better, than unto him, for whom I have often ventured my life: and upon a night he rose & made him ready, and took with him his Staff and Clapper, and went towards the Emperours Country.

And when he was come nigh the gate, he sat down among other poor Lazars, expecting the giving of Alms: and upon a sudden as the Emperour went out of the Palace, all the poor Lazars began to ring their Clappers, and good King Alexander did as the other, but there was no Alms given him, so he tarried until the Emperour was set and served at the Table.

Then went King Alexander unto the Gate, and knocked: and the Porter asked who was there

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there: Alexander answered him, I am a poor despised man. I pray you for the love of God, turn your sight from my visage, but for the reward of God, do my message unto the Emperour. He asked, what was the matter: Alexander said: go and tell him here is a Lazar right horrible ugly to see, which prayeth him for the love of God and King Alexander, that he will grant him this day to eat his Alms before him upon the earth in his Hall. The Porter answered: I wonder you dare desire that of my Lord, for all the Hall is full of Lords and Noblemen, and if they should behold you, they would abhor their meat; but forasmuch as you have required it of me solemnly, for the love of God, I shall do your errand, whatsoever happeneth; and so he went and did his message to the Emperour. When the Emperour heard the Porter name Alexander King of Egypt, he said to the Porter, go thy way, and bring him before me, how horrible and ugly soever his visage be, and ordain him a place before me, that he may eat in my presence.

The Porter brought him immediately, and ordained him a Place, and set him to meat before the Emperour; and when he had well refreshed himself, he said unto one of the Emperours Servants: My dear Friend, do me this errand unto the Emperour: say unto him, that I pray him for the love of God and King Alexander

der, that he will send me his Cup full of Wine. The Seruant said, for the love of God I will do it, but I believe it will not be; for if you should but touch my Lords Cup, he will by no means drinke of the same again; nevertheless he did the errand.

And when the Emperoz heard him name King Alexander, he commanded his Cup to be filled of the best wine, and carried to him, which wine when he had received, he put into his bottle, and took the Ring that Lodowick had giben him, and put it into the Cup, and sent it again unto the Emperoz.

When the Emperoz saw the ring, he instantly knew that it was the same he had given unto King Alexander in friendship, when he departed from him, and thought in his heart that King Alexander had been dead, or else that this man very strangely came by the Ring, and commanded presently that the Lazar should not depart till he had spoken with him; for in no wise could he have any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After Dinner was done, the Emperoz took the sick man apart, and asked him how he came by that Ring: King Alexander demanded if he knew the Ring: The Emperoz said, I know it well. Alexander said, wot you also to whom you gave it: The Emperoz said, I wot right well how it is. Then said Alexander.

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der, that you know not me: for I am Alexander
unto whom you gave the same. When the Em-
peror heard that he fell to the ground for sor-
row, and tore his Robes, and with many sigh-
ings and bewailings, said: O Alexander, you
are the one half of my soul: how is your gon-
ly and delicate Body now so unclean and infect-
ed, that was so fair and pleasant to behold.
He answered: This is happened unto me for the
great Rodelity you have done me in the bed with
my wife, when you laid a naked sword betwixt
you and her: wherefore she became woody, and
hated me, so that she and a Knight that in for-
mer time she had loved, have poisoned me as
you see, and driven me out of my Realm.

And when the Emperor heard that, he took
him about the neck and kissed him, and said: O
my most dear and dearly beloved Brother, I
sorrow to see you in this great perplexity. I
would to God I might die for you. But my most
dear friend, suffer patiently a little time till we
have sent for all the wise Masters in Physick, to
have their Advice, if there be any remedy to be
had or hope of recovery of your health: and if
it be possible to help you, we shall murther spare
Royalty, Empire, nor any other goods com-
petual, to make you whole and sound.

In the mean time he was brought into a fair
Chamber, richly furnished with all things re-
quisite for his ease and health. When in all haste
he

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he sent Messengers through all parts of the World, for the most expert Physicians that might be found, of which within a Month after, were assembled before the Emperour thirty, that were expert and skilful in that Sciences to which the Emperour said: my well beloved Masters, I have a friend that is very grievously infected with a foul Leprosie, whom I would very gladly were healed, and made as sound and whole as ever he was: sparing neither for gold or silver, or any other cost whatsoever, so that he might recover his health again. Then answered the Masters, All this is possible to be done in Physick, you shall soon understand, after we have seen the person: and when they saw him, they knew the cause of his infirmity, and said it was incurable for all Physicians driving.

When the Emperour heard that, he was right sorry, and committed it to Almighty God, calling unto him most of the Religious men that dwelt near the Court: and a number of poor people, besides many other devout persons, desiring them earnestly to make Prayers unto Almighty God, that he would vouchsafe of his infinite goodness, to make whole his dear friend King Alexander. And he himself (with many others) called and prayed to Almighty God for the speedy recovery of his friend.

Notwistpon a time, as King Alexander was at

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his Prayers, there came unto him a voice from Heaven, saying: Tell Lodowick the Emperour, that if he with his own hands will slay those two Children which his Empress had at one burthen, and with the blood of them wash and bathe thy body, thy flesh shall become as fair, and as clear as the bodies of these little Children; if not, thou must never look to be cured whilest breath is in thy body; and so farewell.

Now when King Alexander had heard this strange voice, he began to think with himself what it was, and whence it came; then he replied unto himself: This Vision is not to be shewed; for it is contrary to humane nature, that any man should slay his own Sons for the recovery of a Stranger.

The Emperour continued night and day in prayer with great devotion, earnestly praying to God for King Alexander, never ceasing until a voice came unto him and said: How long will you thus call and cry unto me? When it was openly shewed unto King Alexander, by what means he might recover his health, and his body become clear without either spot or blemish.

The Emperour hearing that voice he went to King Alexander, and said unto him: of all Friends the best and most true, blessed be the most high and everlasting God, who never faileth them that put their trust in him, of whom

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whom I have Knowledge, that it is shewed unto you, how you may be recovered of your Leprosie; wherefore I intreat you that you will plainly lay open unto me how it may be done, for the restoring of your former health, that we may have joy together; and if you need any thing that may do you good, I will fulfil it unto my power; yea, and for your health give all that I have.

Alexander said, Sir, I dare not shew you how I may be cured of my leprosie, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against nature, therefore I will not as yet shew it you, howbeit I have a great trust and confidence in you.

The Emperoz said, Alexander, put your trust in me still; whatsoever is possible to be done for recovering your health, I will do it; and therefore conceal nothing from me, I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I have of God knowledge that if you will slay your two Sons with your own hands, and wash me in their blood, I shall be whole: therefore I have not shewed it unto you: for methinks it is against nature, that the Father should slay his own Children, for the health of a Stranger. The Emperoz said, Say not that you are a Stranger, for I love you as my self, and therefore if I had ten Children, I should not spare one for your health.

Afterwards the Emperoz spied his time when

when the Emperors was out of the way, and
went into the chamber where the children lay,
and drew his knife, and cut both their throats,
and gathered the blood into a vessel, and then
bathed Alexander therewith: and when he was



bathed, his body was as fair and clean, as though
it had been a young Child. When the Emperors
had a perfect knowledge of his visage, and killed
him, saying: O good Alexander; now I see you in
the same form I have oftentimes delighted in.

Blessed be Almighty God, that ever I had
these children, by whom your health is restored,
and your body made pure and clean. And as yet
none had knowledge of the death of these Child-
ren, save the Emperors and Alexander.

And when the Emperors saw that good King

Alexan-

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Alexander was perfectly healed, he said unto him,
I will obtain you an honourable company, and
you shall go hence about five miles; and the
next day send me a messenger, and let me know
the day of your return. And I will then with
great solemnity come and meet you, and you
shall remain with me until I may conveniently
provide for the recovery of your labour. III. III.

This Counsel pleased King Alexander well,
and was performed: for on the next day follow-
ing there came a messenger to the Emperour,
telling him of the return of King Alexander.

When the Emperour heard these tidings, he
joyced and said unto the Emperess: O my
beloved Lord, have you not just cause to re-
joice, seeing Alexander King of Egypt is now
coming to see you, whom of long time you have
missed? If you please to go and meet him with
your Lords and Gentlemen, I will follow with
my Ladies and Gentlewomen; and as yet he
knows not of the death of her two Children. III.

When told the Emperour and Emperess with
great company of Lords and Ladies, to meet
with good King Alexander; and when they met,
with great reverence they received him, and
with great joy brought him unto the Palace,
at the time of Dinner, Alexander was pla-
ced between the Emperour and Emperess, and
all the mirth and cheer that he could make, he
showed unto him. III. III.

When

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When the Emperour saw that, he was glad and so exceeding well pleased, that he said, I mine own Florentine, it glads me above all things, that you make unto King Alexander good cheer. Then answered the Empress, Wherefore should I not, is not his company unto us more precious than Gold and Silver, but unto you, my renowned Lord, much more, for by his means you attain'd unto so great honour and dignity, and by him many times you have been saved from death. The Emperour answered: Then I pray you dearly, beloved Florentine, heere my words: saw you not that deformed Lazar, which yesterday late before our Table, and prayed me for the love of God and good King Alexander, that I would give him drink? She said, my honourable Lord, I saw him well; a more horrible man I never beheld. Then said the Emperour, I demand of you: put case that he were King Alexander, and that he could not be made whole, but with the blood of your two Sons, which you in one day brought into the world, would you that their blood should be shed, that he might bathe himself therein, and therefore have perfect health, and comely favour, as you now see him have. She answered: My renowned Lord and Husband, wherefore demand you of me that question: I tell you of a truth, that if I had ten Sons, I should gladly slay them with my own hands.

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to prepare for him a Bath, and would wash him therein my own self, rather than I should leave him in such a loathsome and miserable case; so horrible to behold, and in such danger of health withal. God might send us more Children, but such a Friend were a thing impossible for us ever hereafter to find throughout the whole World.

When the Emperour heard this, he was well pleased and said: O my Loving Empress, had you rather have your Children dead, then Alexander should languish in his Leprosie? When I shall shew you the whole truth of the matter? What foul Lazar which you saw was Alexander, that lieth here by us, and is made whole with the blood of our two Sons, and they are dead.

As soon as the Empress heard that, she began with extremity of sorrow mortally to cry out as nature would she should, although she had said before, she had rather see her Children dead, then Alexander remain in such misery.

The Nourishers of the Children understanding this, presently with great crying ran to the Nursery; and great bewailing was made through the Emperours Court for his two Sons, and when the Nourishers came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and singing a Song of praise and thanksgiving, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for restoring their lives. When they returned with all haste unto

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unto the Emperour and Empress, and shewed unto them how the Children were living, and that about their Throats where they were cut, they had Circles of Gold: whereof were great joy and gladness in all the Court, with thanksgiving to Almighty God, for that exceeding great miracle and wonderful work.

After that the Emperour with a great multitude assembled together, went with King Alexander into Egypt, and set him again in possession of his Realm. The Queen and the Knight, who had lived long together in Adultery, he caused to be slain. And when this was done, the Emperour had one only Sister, whom he married unto King Alexander.

When King Alexander had obtained all his Realm again, and was set in rest and peace, the Emperour returned unto his Empire: and King Alexander so wisely and politically governed himself in his Affairs, that he overcame his rebellious Enemies.

And when he was seated in his Glory, Peace and might, he thought upon his Father and Mother (by whom he was cast into the Sea, who swelled in four parts) and sent a Messenger, to let them know, that the King of Egypt upon such a day would be with them, to view those parts of the Country, and to sport himself, and to make a Royal feast. When the Messenger was there come, they received him with honor

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hountifull entertainments, and large gifts, and sent him back, saying, that their services should be ready at all times to do the Kings pleasure, but that they could not possibly discern that he should vouchsafe them that honour, whereof they were not worthy, as to visit them in those parts, to sport himself there a while.

The Messenger returned and shewed the King how willingly they would receive him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how faithful they were and ready to do him service, wherewith the King was well pleased. When the set day was come, the King with a fair company rode towards his Fathers house, who was to his Father and Mother unknown.

When the King came near his Fathers Castle, the Knight rode joyfully to meet him, and when he came nigh to the King he alighted, and did him reverence upon his knees: but the King took him up presently, and commanded him to take horse again, and so they rode together unto the Castle.

And when they were come thither, the Mother came unto him and fell upon her knees, and welcomed him gladly; and the King took her up as lovingly and kissed her: she said unto him. My Lord, you do us (unworthy) this honour with the presence of your most honourable Personage which we shall never be able to deserve.

After the Meate was all ready, and the time

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of day was come to go to dinner, the Father came with a Wason and Cwer, and the Mother with a Tewel, saying, Sir, all things are ready, please you to wash; and when the King saw that he smiled, and said to himself: Now is the song of the Nightingale true, that my Father and my Mother should gladly do as I have said, if my self would thereunto consent: But he would not suffer them to do him any such service, saying, your age is to be honoured, and therefore I would have none of it; and then he called one of his Servants, whom he commanded to do that Service. Then said the Knight, you will not suffer us to do it for our honour, because we are not worthy thereof. The King said, have I not said, that for your age I forbear you; when the King was set at the Table, he set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left; and then, as much as they might, or durst, did behold his favour and countenance.

After Dinner the King entred into a fair Chamber, and made the Knight with his Lady to follow him, and commanded all others to void their presence.

When they were all alone, the King said, have you no Children; they answered, We have neither Son nor Daughter. And the King said, had you never any; the Knight answered, We had one Son, but he is long ago dead.

dead; the King asked of what death he died: And the Knight said a natural death. Then the King said, if I find it otherwise, you are found in a most horrible fault. Then asked the Knight, My most honourable and renowned Lord, wherefore enquire you so earnestly after our Son; the King answered, not without just cause, and therefore I must, and will know of what death he died: if you will not tell me, I shall cause you both to die most shameful deaths.

When they heard that, they fell upon the ground on their knees before him, and asked his pardon and forgiveness. But the King would not suffer them to kneel, but took them up, and said: To that intent I came not unto your house, to eat your bread and to betray you: But say to me the very truth, and you shall be pardoned, for it is given me to understand that you have put him to death, and if that you be found culpable therein, and come to judgment, you must die a most shameful death. Then said the Knight, My most honourable Lord, save my life, and I shall shew you the very truth. The King said, fear not, for I shall do you no harm. Then answered the Knight, and said, Most dread Sovereign Lord, we had a Son, that was wise, learned, and intelligent: and upon a time as he stood before us, and served at the Table, there came to the window a Night-
ingale

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ingale that sung exceeding sweetly, whose song he began to interpret, and to tell us what it meant, and said, this Bird singeth, that I shall become so great and mighty a Lord that you my Father shall be glad to hold a Basin with water to wash my hands, and my Mother a Towel, that if I will suffer it.

And when I heard that, I was sore moved, and vexed in my mind; and so I took him upon my shoulder, and cast him into the Sea for to drown him. Then said the King, what evil had come to you, if he had been made so great? We think it should have been for your honour and profit. The Knight said, my Renowned Lord, it was no reason, but woodness. The King answered: 'twas a great folly in you, that you would do against the Ordinance of God. And now you shall know for truth, I am your Son that you cast into the Sea, and God of his great mercy hath saved me, and by his grace brought me to this estate and dignity.

The Father and Mother hearing that, with fear and joy amazed, fell flat unto the ground: whom he lovingly took up, saying: Fear not but rather rejoyce, for you shall suffer no harm: but my exaltation shall be to your glory, and profit: and so he kiss his Father and Mother with great joy. Then began the Mother to weep greatly; and the King said to her, leave off your sorrowing, and be of good cheer, for in my

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my Realm you shall be honoured above me during my life: And he took them with him into his Kingdom, where they dwelled a long time in honour and joy; and ended their days with comfort and love of all the People.

Here follows the Application of the Example to the purpose.

Then said Dioclesian the Emperors Son, Lord, have you understood what I have said: the Emperoz said, right well: then said the Son, my most honored and redoubted Father, although that God hath given and endued me with wisdom and understanding above others, that shall not be an impairing of your honour and might; but more for the preservation and maintenance of the same: so in like manner, the Kings excellent Majesty, which was nothing to the hinderance of the Father, but this rather for his worship, profit and greater comfort. For as long as they lived, it was in very great joy and mirth, that they were loved of the People, and honoured of the Kingdom. Then said the Emperoz, my beloved Son, I will wholly resigne all the Empire unto you to govern & rule: for I perceive well by your Relation, that you have to me declared that it is best for me, and most for my ease, that I now leave this worldly and tedious business, and the labour and care of a King, and betake me to my rest

rest and ease, for I am old and feeble. Then answered the Son, and said unto his Father. My most honourable Lord and Father, so shall it be, but as long as you live, you shall have the Authority and Government of the Empire at your command, as it appertaineth unto an Emperoz; but in all the businesses that are laborious and troublesome, I will always be ready to minister any service that possible I can, according to my bounden duty.

How Judgment was given upon the Empress and how that she and her Lover were both put to death.

Then the Emperoz commanded the Judges and Justices to sit in Judgment, and to bring again the Empress before them: with the Ladies, and also the Ribauld, her best beloved, cloathed in the vesture and habit of a woman, whom he did cause to stand next unto the Empress: then the Emperors Son asked Sentence and just judgment upon them; saying, My most honourable Lord and Father, even as you are Emperoz of the World, and that your Majesty and Power requireth to do true justice unto all your Subjects that desire it: so now I demand, that you this day do give right sentence and true judgment upon the untruth, falshood, and shame, which were put, and alledg-

MASTERS.

unto me by the Empress; for the which accusations, I have been sometimes led unto the Gallows, and have stood in great jeopardy, and peril of my life, and also that she hath been to you untrue of her body, as you have seen by good proof made before you; and on the which I ask judgment: and therefore command your Justices and Judges to give sentence thereupon, according to Right, Equity and Law.

As soon as the Empress heard this, she fell flat to the earth before the Emperour, and asked mercy and forgiveness for her just offence and misdoing: but it helped not, profited nothing, for the Son would have right, and desired Judgment. Then spake the Judges and Justices, Her own misdoings condemn her, and the report of her Lemmon by her kept and found: therefore we give Sentence against the Empress, that she shall be bound to a Horses Tail, and waled through all the streets of the City, to the place of Execution, and there be burnt. The Judge and give sentence against the King: that he shall be quartered and smitten in pieces, and his flesh cast to the Hounds and Birds of the Air to devour him: and this Sentence was approved and allowed of the people.

Hereafter in short time died the Emperour, and Dioclesian his Son governed and ruled the Empire with great wisdom, and always held and kept his Masters with him in great honour and

The Seven Wise

And glory. By whose counsel and wisdom he governed the Empire; and he excelled all his Predecessors in Riches, and doing Right and Justice: and his Masters so loved him above all others in the World, that many times they put themselves in great peril and jeopardy of their lives for him. And so ended their days in joy and honour to the praise of Almighty G D D.

FINIS.

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